

SERMONS

FOR EVERY

SUNDAY

In the YEAR.

IN FOUR VOLUMES.

By *F. BL*TH*, Disc. CAR.—S.T.P.

VOLUME IV.

For the Fourth Quarter of the ECCLESIASTICAL YEAR.



L O N D O N :

Printed, by J. HOYLES, for the AUTHOR.

M D C C X L I I I .

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By W. B. E. W. D. D. C. A. R. — S. T. P.

VOLUME IV

For the Fourth Quarter of the Christian Year.



LONDON

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MDCCLXII



C O N T E N T S

To the FOURTH VOLUME.

S E R M O N I.

On the Fifteenth SUNDAY after PENTECOST.

St. L U K E vii. 12.

When JESUS came nigh to the Gate of the City of Naim, behold a dead Man was carried forth, the only Son of his Mother. Page 1

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C O N T E N T S.

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SERMON



S E R M O N

On the Fifteenth SUNDAY after

P E N T E C O S T.

St. LUKE vii. 12.

When JESUS came nigh to the Gate of the City of Naim, behold a dead Man was carried forth, the only Son of his Mother; and she was a Widow, and a great Multitude of the City with her. Whom when our Lord had seen, being moved with Mercy upon her he say'd to her, weep not. And to the Dead Man, Young Man, I say to thee, arise. And he that was Dead, sat up and began to speak. And Fear took them All; and they magnified God, saying, that God hath visited his People.



THE Major Part of Readers of the Holy Scriptures are but mere superficial Attenders to the sacred Doctrins and spiritual Treasures therein contain'd. The Indolence of Some and the Pride of Others are the real Causes

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why

why out of So Many Christians who apply themselves even with a devout Intention to this Holy Study, so very Few reap Benefit from it. Some give themselves up to such a shameful Indolence of Mind as blinds their Intellects with a kind of Lethargic Stupidity, and suffers them neither to see nor come within the Reach of any thing beyond an outside Comprehension of sensitive Ideas. And These while they read or hear the Word of God, wholly burying their Attention in the bare Letter of the Text, lose all the Delight and Profit they might reap from the instructive Mysteries which are figuratively couch'd under the Letter. Others again led into the opposit extreme by the Eagerness of an overstraining Pride and Curiosity, more from a vain Ambition of shewing their Penetration than from the humble Desire of gaining Holy Knowledge, scornfully pass by the most obvious Beauties, to run in search of the hidden. And These, in reading the Sacred Scriptures, heedlessly overlook'd the rich Instructions offer'd them in the literal Sense; to pry into the more Sublime Mysteries contain'd in the Allegory, which however are too exalted for the Approaches of Curiosity and Presumption. Whence it too often happens that wilfully turning their backs on the one, they are justly dazzled out of the Sight of the Others: And precipitate into the most absurd Depths
of

of Ignorance and Error, by presuming to soar above the humble Bounds of their Station and Capacity. What wonder then is it that These however good their original Intention in reading the holy Word of God might be, should lose at least one half the Pleasure and Advantage they might reap from so religious an Exercise, if not the Whole. Fools that they are, the One Sort for want of exerting a pious Diligence accompanied with Humility, the Others for want of curbing their Arrogance with a lowliness of Mind, either read at best with little Fruit or wrest what they read to their own Perdition, as St. Peter says. *Ah Christians it is to such slothful or arrogant Mortals as these that your Saviour tells you, all things are done in Parables, that seeing they may see and not see, and hearing they may hear and not understand. Lest at any time they should be converted and their Sins be forgiven them.* Alas what a terrible Punishment this and yet how just! For how justly do not they deserve to have all Lights and Graces lock'd up from them, who thus dare to approach this Divine Fountain of Lights and Graces only in the Disposition to abuse them. Have a Care then Christians what You do. Study the Will of God in the Holy Scriptures: You can Study them too often; but then let not Sloth get the better

of You; nor yet Pride. Read them with Humility, and peruse them with Industry. Be not content with reaping one half the Benefit they are capable of yielding you, by looking no farther than the Letter. And yet when you carry your Searches farther let Pride have no Part in your Industry, but begin by the Letter. If You attend to that with the Diligence you ought and with a due Deference to God's Church and Ministers; it will insensibly lead You to the more hidden Mysteries it infolds. Nothing will sooner or more effectually convince You of this undeniable Truth than a practical Comment on the Gospel of this Day, which is chiefly included in the Words of my Text. And therefore I shall make it the great End of my present Discourse to teach you practically the Method of reading the Word of God with Fruit, by shewing You.

I. The important Instructions which Your Saviour gives you in the literal Sense of this Passage; *And*

II. Those which may be drawn from the more Sublime Allegory or Figure it includes.

“ Deign then, O thou Eternal Wisdom
 “ of the Father to give us that true humble
 “ Industry by which alone we can be
 “ worthy to reap Instruction from thy
 “ Blessed

" Blessed Word; that seeing we may see,
" and hearing understand and practice the
" saving Truths which thou has't any Way
" reveal'd to us.

I. The Miracle recorded in this Day's Gospel is rich in the most useful Instructions, whether we take it in a literal or a figurative Sense. Here is a venerable Widow weeping over her Beloved deceased Son in his Coffin. Her awful Distress and reverend Aspect added to her amiable Character and hapless Circumstance draw a Multitude of Inhabitants from the City to share in her Grief, and, by joining with her in the funeral Lamentations over his Grave, to alleviate the Sorrow which that melancholy Office must sharpen in One so near to the Deceased as a Mother. So moving a Scene, once it reach'd the Eyes could not fail affecting the tender compassionate Soul of Christ. If her Grief was pathetic enough to force a Fellow-feeling from the Hearts of inconsiderate Mortals; where is the Wonder that it should reap Relief from that great Sympathiser in human Woes, that gracious Parent of Orphans and Protector of Widows?

Now if you do but seriously consider even the bare Letter of this Gospel; what a rare Example, Christians, does not your Divine Master set you in this Passage of the Tenderness

derness with which You ought to be affected by the Distresses of One-another! Christ you see approaches an afflicted comfortless Woman without waiting for the Ceremony of being call'd to her Assistance; tho' he had the right to expect it. And not content to sooth her with Words of Comfort, removes the very Cause of her Discomfort. Will not You then, O Mortals, be henceforth ashamed to look on the Miseries of your Fellow-Creatures, without the least Emotion of Pity, when your Saviour is so sensibly touch'd by them as to work a Miracle in the behalf of the Wretched? What, my Sacred Saviour! Shal't thou, who was't no more Subject to the Sting of worldly Afflictions than it pleased thee to be by Choice, shal't thou, I say dear Lord, have been so affected by the Sufferings of Others, as not to be able in some Sense to pass a poor Woman in Tears, without relieving her at the Expence of a Miracle? And yet shall Every-One of us, Wretches ourselves and liable every Moment to all the Miseries which any of us feel, be nevertheless so harden'd in Cruelty as to behold the Pains, the Wants or Necessities of our Brother Sufferers with dry Eyes and an unconcern'd Heart. Ah never let it be said, Christians, if you mean to pass for Disciples of Christ, if you wish even to be thought Human.

There

There is a Something so divinely great in the making, or even endeavouring to make a sad Heart glad, that we cannot help paying a kind of Homage even to Mortals where we see them engaged in so noble an Undertaking. Mercy is the darling Attribute of God. This his Divine Majesty exerts and boasts of in Sacred Scripture more, and more often, than any other of his infinite Perfections. That Man therefore who makes it his Business to remove, or to lessen where he cannot remove the Sufferings of his Fellow-Creatures, of whatever Nation, Temper, State or Religion they be, and does it for the pure Love of God and Charity to his Image in Want, must necessarily approach the nearest to God in likeness, inasmuch as he struggles to imitate him in the favorite Perfection of his God-head. And whatever Frailties such a Man may have been subject to, whatever Vices he may have been Guilty of, he has much more room to hope for Mercy from God than Another who has no other Fault or Crime than that of wanting Mercy and Compassion towards his suffering Neighbour.

So grateful to God is the Practice of Works of Mercy towards your indigent Brethren, Christians, that your Blessed Redeemer places it among the Beatitudes, *Blessed are the Merciful*, says he, *for they shall find*

find Mercy. Now if it be true that *Every Exception establishes a Rule to the contrary,* as all Philosophers and Divines agree it does ; may we not hence infallibly conclude that None but the Merciful shall reap the Benefit of that Mercy which All stand in need of from God. For O thou All-seeing Majesty, in whose Sight the best and purest of our Actions are not free from Blemish ! Where is the Soul in this Life so just so spotless as not to stand in need of thy Mercy in the Next ? In vain then, O Christians will any other good Actions of yours plead to God for Mercy upon you, if you yourselves are void of Mercy and Compassion to your Brethren. Blessed then, O thrice, *Blessed are the Merciful for they shall find Mercy.*

And can you doubt, Beloved, on the other Hand of the future Wretchedness of Such as are Strangers to the Practice of this Divine Virtue ? What can be more odious and unnatural in the Eyes not only of God but even of wretched Man than a human Breast void of Humanity ? And how is it possible for that Breast to be Human which cannot Commiserate : When Humanity, as a Virtue, is properly nothing other than the tender Emotion of sympathizing in the Evils of another ? May we not then boldly draw from the Words of our Saviour this dreadful Conclusion, *Cursed are the Unmerciful*

merciful for they shall find no Mercy? It is Matter of Fact, Christians, and I will prove it to you. You have no Title, no Claim to the Divine Mercy but by the Mediation of your Redeemer Christ. And what Share can you have in the Benefits of his Mediation without abiding in him? And this You cannot do without practising Mercy after his Example to Such as stand in need of it. *He who says that he abides in Christ,* says St. John, *to make his Words good, must walk just as he walk'd.* Unless then, You have the same Tenderness, Compassion and Fellow-feeling for your suffering Neighbour which he had, You walk not as he walk'd; and consequently you abide not in him, you are not his Disciples, but Hypocrites, Prophaners of his Sacred Name and false Pretenders to the Benefits of his Mediation and the Mercy of God which that alone can secure to you. Why did he stoop his Glory to take upon himself the Flesh of Man; why did he live a painful Life in that Flesh and submit that Flesh at length to a cruel and ignominious Death, but to practice Mercy to You, O Christians? And what were all the Actions of his Life, the Cures he perform'd on the Sick, the Blind, the Lame, but so many practical Lessons to you of that Mercy which you must exert towards One-another? And why did he in

the Gospel for this Day work a Miracle of the most extraordinary Nature in calling a Dead Man back to Life, but that, by shewing his tender Mercy to the deceased Son and his surviving Distrest Mother, he might enforce to You by Example as well as Precept the New Commandment he has given you, that *You love one-another even as he has loved You*. It is plain then from the Letter of this Gospel, and infinit other Passages of the Sacred Life of Christ that you can have no share in him and his Mercy without loving One-another as he has loved You, and being as diligent to relieve the Distresses of your suffering Brethren as he has graciously shewn himself in doing Mercy to You. O! I could dwell forever on this Subject and never want Matter to moralize upon. There is something so sublimely excellent, and at the same time so essential to a Christian in the Tenderness of fraternal Charity, that I could never be tired with preaching this Duty to you; and you ought never to be tired with hearing it, or putting it in Practice. For 'tis chiefly by the Practice of this Virtue you must attain to the Accomplishment of the Law of Grace. *Bear ye the Burdens of one-another*, says St. Paul; *and so will you fulfill the Law of Christ*.

Thus much might suffice to shew you, Beloved, the rich Instruction you may reap from

from a Devout Attention to the bare literal Sense of this wonderful Passage in the Life of Christ. There is however another very useful Moral annex to it which I cannot forbear taking some Notice of; because it may be of the greater Consolation to the Unhappy amidst their most grievous Misfortunes. Wherefore Christians after having labour'd to convince such of you as are at ease of the Duty of feeling for Others, let me now say Something to those of You as are Unfortunate, that You may learn to feel less for yourselves.

However widely you may seem situated, in your Miseries from every Prospect of Relief; be assured that your Evils can never grow so desperate as to be past the Power of God to redress. And therefore if You place a steady Confidence in him, you have Reason to think that he will even exert that Power to redress them. That it is in his Power, the Miracle recorded in this Gospel is a sufficient Conviction: And that it is his Inclination, we have his own sacred Word for it. *Call upon me in the Day of Tribulation*, says he, *and I will hear you.*

In your worldly Concerns, once you make the filial Trust you owe to your Maker give place to Sollicitude, Anxiety, or Despair; you do him the basest Injury he is capable of receiving from You. 'Tis

an Argument that you, either call in Question his Wisdom and Power to relieve you, or doubt of the Riches of his Goodness. And therefore in so doing you discharge God of the Care of providing for you and justify his Rigour in leaving you to yourself. And what Prospect of Relief you can then have, when the Almighty withdraws his Providence from watching over you, I leave you to consider. This I know that on the contrary, if unshaken amidst the most seemingly comfortless Labyrinths of Life, you still persist in your Reliance on his Protection and Assistance, sheltering yourself by Hope under his Wings; you will then lay all the Business of your Deliverance upon him; He will make it a kind of ineffable Obligation on himself, in Virtue of his unalterable Promise to assist You; and by ways unsearchable to you, will, if your Good be at stake, release you from your Trials. Or if he judges it more expedient for you to have them continued; he will at least help you to such Advantages from your Temptations as will strengthen you to bear them. For so infinitely good is the Divine Being, that, if you trust in him, *He will not suffer you to be tempted above what you can bear with Pleasure and Profit*, as St. Paul says. In a word if you place all your Hopes, amidst your Grievs, in the Power,

Power, Wisdom and Goodness of God, you properly dwell in him and must be relieved by him, as he has promised you by the Mouth of his Royal Prophet. *He who dwells in the Help of the most High shall abide in the Protection of the God of Heaven.*

But what need have we to recur to the Divine Promises, when we have so remarkable an Instance of the Divine Goodness in fulfilling them. It is a vulgar Proverb that *while there is Life there is Hope*. But your Blessed Saviour to recall you from this confined, this narrow Way of thinking, exerts his Almighty Power to raise a Dead Man to Life. For why, think you, did he work this stupendous Miracle chiefly, but to convince You, O desponding Mortals that your Hopes ought to survive even Life itself. Learn then, O Christians, into whatever Degree of Distress Your Affairs or Occurrences may plunge you, never to throw off that filial Reliance, that religious Trust, which you ought in all Events to Honour the Divine Bounty with. And be well assured that however great Confidence you repose in God; your Hopes will always fall infinitely short of his Power, Wisdom and Goodness to protect you. And with Such a Protection, O Christian Souls, what Evils have you to fear? What Blessings may you not expect? A Confidence like this was the
only

only Solace which remain'd to the Afflicted Widow in this Gospel; Such a one alone was capable of buoying her up from sinking under her Weight of Woe: And this, You see, entitled her to such a share of Divine Favour and Assistance, that the Son of God could not overlook her Distress, nor even forbear working a Miracle to dry up her Tears and reward her Affiance by granting her even more than She could expect or hope for. Endeavour therefore, O afflicted Christian, whoever you are, or whatever your Affliction may be, to copy after this confident Widow in your filial Submission to the All-wise Dispositions of God. And be ready to reap amidst your Grievs all the Comfort which this Sacred Passage seriously attended to is capable of affording you even in a literal Sense.

II. Yet if we go farther Christians and examin into the Allegory of the Holy Text; we shall find it equally rich in Salutary Instructions, and big with such Figurative Truths as are extremely important, inasmuch as they concern the Major Part of Mankind. Let us then briefly unfold them. Who is here meant by the venerable Widow? Who are the Multitude of Citizens following her to the Funeral? What is this only Son of hers whose Decease they bewail;
and

and to what End is he restored again living to his afflicted Mother? Hence you will be able to discern whether or not there be any figurative Truth wrapt up in this miraculous Resuscitation which does or may concern any of you.

The Pious Widow then is the Holy Church Militant of Christ, which is and has been a Widow ever since the Crimes of her unnatural Children, by an unprecedented Parricide, brought her heavenly Spouse JESUS to the cruel and ignominious Death of the Cross. The Multitude following her are Angels, Inhabitants of the celestial City of the Blessed, who attend to minister Comfort to her amidst her unutterable Grief for the Loss of her only Son. But who is this only Son, what is his Condition, and whence the Cause? Alas her only Son is every new fallen Sinner, for the time: His Condition is that of a Soul unanimated by Grace, the Cause of whose spiritual Death is the Contagion of mortal Sin.

The Church like a tender Nurse, a fond Mother and a good Shepherdess, looks on every Christian straying from the Paths of Christian Virtue as the only Child, the only One of her Flock She has to take Care of for a time. And therefore leaves the Ninety Nine, leaves the rest whom She can leave in safety to pursue the One who is gone astray,
to

to restore him to his Spiritual Health, and to bring him back again to the safe Union of her Flock. But alas how often does it happen that She has the Discomfort, amidst all her Care, to find the Object of her Pursuit, her only Child made a Prey to mortal Sin, unanimated with Grace; and consequently dead to her, dead to the Angels, and dead to the Benefits of God's Mercy. Then, then it is She laments with inconsolable Grief, and the Angels in Compassion to her Grief, attend on her and join with her in Prayer for the Alleviation of her Anguish. And then, if Christ, passing by deigns to lend a pitying Ear to her Complaint, it may be, it is possible that the Unhappy Deceased will, by Means of a Miracle, be restored again to the Life of Grace. But O Christians! Think and shudder with thinking, how terrible a Situation it must be for a Soul to be in, to stand in need of a Miracle to be restored again to the Grace of God. And yet such is the miserable Plight of every Christian in mortal Sin. For, as an eminent Father of the Church observes, it requires a Miracle infinitely greater from the Hand of God to move the Free-will of a reluctant Sinner to Repentance than it does to breathe Life again into an unresisting Lump of Clay which was once living before.

You

You then, You, O Sinner, are this only Child over whom your Holy Mother the Church weeps: It is for you that She and the Angels take on; while you, lifeless, senseless unhappy Wretch, remain insensible of the deathful Condition you are in; and, breathing only an irrational graceless reprobate Existence, still riot, doat on, and fancy you live. Let every Christian search his own Breast and see if this has never been his miserable Situation. And you, O pious Souls, who read, or hear this Gospel in a State of Grace call yourselves to an Account. Have you never destroy'd in you that Life of Grace you received in Baptism? If you have, repent, tremble at the dreadful Circumstance You plunged, yourselves into; acknowledge the infinit Bounty of God in having wrought a Miracle of Grace to restore you again to the Life of his Love; and make it your Business for the future to lay out that Life, that Love, to the forwarding his Glory, and your own eternal Happiness.

Never build on receiving the like Favour again. No: Your Divine Saviour suffer'd this Widow, with her deceased Son, to pass by him as it was by accident, on purpose to teach you that you are not to rely on such Miracles as ordinary Effects of his Bounty. In fact, says the great St. *Augustin*,

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You

You ought rather to reflect, that tho' " God
 " has graciously promised Pardon to every
 " Sinner who shall truly repent, yet he
 " has no where promised Time or the
 " Grace of Repentance to those who shall
 " Sin." On the contrary, Beloved, God
 expects, and justly expects, you to be ever
 upon your guard against Sin; and if through
 Frailty you have once unhappily fallen into
 Sin, when he vouchsafes to restore you
 again to the Life of Grace, he does it not
 to embolden you to fall again, but to give
 you Time, Means and Opportunity to guard
 against it for the time to come, better than
 you did before: Since warn'd by your past
 Misery you cannot but have learnt by Ex-
 perience the danger of Relapsing. And
 this was the End which Christ propos'd in
 raising the Dead Youth of this Gospel, not
 that he might lavish Life again as he had
 done, but that he might make a better Use
 of what Privation had taught him to prize.

The Gospel therefore tells us that the
 Youth when he was raised to Life, imme-
 diately spoke, and Christ restored him to
 his Mother. Do You then, O Christian Pe-
 nitents, practice the like. If you are con-
 scious of having been spiritually in the same
 Condition, and that by the grace of Re-
 pentance you are again alive; speak, *that*
is, acknowledge your past Sins in a due
 Manner

Manner by humbling yourselves at the Sacred Tribunal of Confession; redouble your Fervour for the future, and endeavour^d to make yourselves worthy, that Christ should mercifully restore you to the Bosom of your Holy Mother his Church: That as You have caused her and her angelic Attendants so much Affliction hitherto, You may give them occasion to rejoice over your Conversion henceforth more than over the Innocence of all the rest of the Faithful. By this Means you will One Day deserve to join with them in their Rejoicings over the Conversion of Others, when you yourselves shall be lifted triumphant to sit amidst them and sing eternally in concert with them that joyful Canticle, *Blessed be the Lord God of Israel because he has visited and wrought the Redemption of his People.*

Such are the Useful Instructions, Christians, which you may draw from a Devout, diligent and humble Attention to the Word of God in this Holy Gospel. And Every Part of the Holy Scriptures are capable of yielding as rich a Treasure of Spiritual Delight and Profit. But then Christians to reap these valuable Fruits you must not give way to Indolence, Pride, or Curiosity. No: Read them, or hear them read with an eager Zeal of knowing God's Will, but still with lowliness of Mind, and a Desire

only of knowing what he is pleased to unfold to you, by means of his Ministers or immediate Inspiration under the Direction of his Church. To which, whatever you do, be always ready chearfully to submit your Sense and Sentiments. In this Disposition You may safely read the Holy Scriptures, and in reading them the Divine Grace will visit and enlighten your Minds that seeing you may see, and hearing you may understand, In a word, you will reap from them Pleasure, Profit and eternal Salvation. And may even in this Life eccho to the Saints in the Words of my Text by magnifying God, and saying God *has visited his People*. For then you will be sensible of the Visit of such a Portion of his Grace in this Life as will lift you to the Fulness of his Glory in the Next. Which, &c. *In the Name, &c.*





S E R M O N

On the Sixteenth SUNDAY after

P E N T E C O S T.

St. JOHN xii. 31. St. LUKE xiv. 11.

*Now is the Judgment of the World: Now
the Prince of this World shall be cast forth.
And I, if I be exalted from the Earth,
will draw all things to Myself--- Because
Every-One that exalteth himself shall be
humbled: And he that humbleth himself
shall be exalted.*



NOW indeed, Christians, *is the
Judgment of the World* come
to an End, I hope with you.
And *now*, if you are really
desirous of following Christ to
his Glory, *the Prince of this World shall be
cast forth*, shall be banish'd in good earnest
from the Throne he has so long fix'd in your
Hearts:

Hearts: And the Holy Standard of Christ's Cross shall be fix'd up by your Affections in the place of that Banner of Luxury which You have hitherto list'd under. This is the Day on which the Church commemorates the glorious Exaltation of that Cross on which your Divine Mediator pay'd down the generous Ransom of his precious Blood to Redeem you from the Slavery of the World to the Freedom of his Grace. What Day then more proper, more seasonable than this to turn your Backs on that World and pass the decisive Judgment, the last Sentence of Oblivion upon it. For what other End, think you, has your Holy Mother thus solemnly exposed to public View this once ignoble Badge of Infamy and now triumphant Trophy of Honour, but for the same gracious Purpose which induced her heavenly Spouse JESUS to beautify, raise and enrich it with his precious Blood? And why, O Mortals, did He himself prefer it before all the Scepters of the Earth, but, that by teaching you in practice to do the same, he might draw you from the tyrannic Servitude of the World and it's empty Allurements to the Blessed Liberty of Grace and it's solid Promises? *I, says he, if I be exalted from the Earth will draw all things to Myself.* Yes, Beloved, yes. This was the ineffable Design of your Blessed Redeemer. For no
other

other End did he chuse to die an ignominious Death on a painful Cross than mercifully to draw you to a perfect Love and Imitation of him crucified; that humbled and crucified with him you may be exalted by him to that Glory for which you were created, and which you never can attain to but by Self-denial, voluntary Crosses, and Humiliation. *Because, as Christ himself tells you in the Gospel for this Sunday, Every-One that exalteth himself shall be humbled. And He that humbleth himself shall be exalted.*

Hence I gather two manifest Truths; the *First* is, that All Christians are, by an indispensable Tie of Gratitude, bound to love and honour Christ crucified with all the Devotion they are capable of; and this they can never effectually express without heartily embracing after his Example a Life of Crosses and Self-depression. The *Second* Truth is, that without doing this they cannot truly love even themselves: inasmuch as they cannot refuse renouncing the World and its Enjoyments for the Sake of Christ's Cross, without renouncing their only true Felicity.

To set this Matter in an irresistible Light is the purpose of my present Discourse: In which I mean to exhort you, for your own Happiness, as well as for the Honour of your Saviour Christ, to take up your Cross and follow him, by shewing you,

I. That

On the Sixteenth SUNDAY

I. That it is your indispensable Duty to embrace a Life of Crosses and Humiliation; since you cannot shew your Gratitude to him but by imitating him.

II. That it is your absolute Interest, because you cannot enter into his Glory by any other way than he enter'd:
And

III. Hence will undeniably Result the Necessity and Advantages of such a Life.

“ O deign then thou dear crucified Redeemer to make thy Sufferings dear to us. Let not thy Exaltation on the Cross be vain, but sweetly draw us all to thee by a perfect Imitation of thy true Contempt of all that's earthly. ”

I. Christians then are under the indispensable Duty of embracing a Life of Crosses and Humiliation after the Example of their humble crucified Saviour. They have no other Means of shewing their Gratitude to him for the infinit Favours he has mercifully bestow'd upon them, than to encounter every Difficulty, to do and suffer all for the sake of following him to the end of Life, with all the Affection of their Souls. Now how can you follow your crucified Saviour but

but by treading in his Steps and renouncing to all the empty Enjoyments which the World may offer you, to imitate this Divine Pattern in his Sufferings and Humiliation? Christ himself tells you, Beloved, that this is the only way you have to prove yourselves his Disciples. *He who will come after me let him renounce himself and take up his Cross and follow me.* And if you will but seriously look into his Life, you will find it throughout sow'd with nothing other than Humiliation and Crosses, Crosses and Humiliation, So that if you mean to follow him at all you have, truly speaking, nothing to follow him in without These.

All the different Crosses and Humiliations which Mankind can any wise be subject to, may be reduced to three Sorts: Those which come immediately from the Hand of God himself, those which come by his Divine Permission from the Hands of Men, and those of a Man's own seeking. All these your Divine Saviour embraced for your Sake. And therefore to be grateful Disciples to him, you must embrace them all in your turn, for the sake of following him.

What was the laborious Life he led for thirty Years in Retirement toiling at the Business of his putative Father, Earning his own and part of his Earthly Parents Bread

at the Sweat of his Brow? Was it not a voluntary Hardship a Cross of his own seeking? He on whom the Angels fed and were satiated, could have supported himself and his Holy Family on the same Divine Food which they feasted on. Or if he thought it necessary for his and their human Nature to be fed by ordinary Aliment, he could have created Bread as well for them at *Nazareth* as for four thousand in the Desert, without either taking himself, or Suffering his Blessed Mother and her Spouse, to take so much Pains for an humble homely Sustenance. But then this would not have been consistent with the Self-denial Lowliness and Mortification he came to practice himself, and to set you an Example of. This would have afforded him Ease and Glory; and he came to embrace a Life of Crosses and Humiliation, of a piece with the Death of the Cross, by which he was to be exalted to Glory, and when exalted to draw You; O Christians, after him *I, if I be exalted from the Earth, will draw all things to Myself.*

Ah Christians, will you then murmur any longer at the little Struggles you meet with in Life to earn a Support in your respective Callings, when your Saviour had beat the Path so smooth before you by his Example. No if you mean to follow him, you must make a Virtue of Necessity, and do that
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by Choice for his Sake which Necessity makes inevitable. Be industrious then as your Saviour was, labour willingly, and sanctify your Labours by doing them for, and offering them to him. Be not content to labour only for your own Advantage, but after his Example, labour even for the good of Others. Never be high-minded, nor wait for Humiliation till it overtakes you, but go in search of it; rejoice when you meet with it and for the Sake of your humble Saviour embrace it when ever, or from whatever quarter it comes; else how can you make any grateful Return for the voluntary Labours, Crosses and Humiliations he has encounter'd for love of You; how can you hope to follow him?

Follow him but with your Eye, and what lengthen'd Fasts, what frequent Vigils, what weary Days, and what painful Nights will you find him chearfully go through, by Choice, to pave the Way for you to eternal Glory. One time You will find him Fasting in a Desert for forty Days together, other times spending whole Nights in Prayer. Sometimes you will find him incessantly preaching, teaching, and taking long and laborious Journeys to relieve the Sick, to raise the Dead, to comfort the Distrest to instruct the Ignorant, and all his Refreshment is to sleep on the bare Ground in the open Air,

with less Accommodation than dumb Animals. For tho' Birds have their Nests, and Foxes have their Holes, yet the mortified humble Son of Man has not where to repose his Head. But ah Sweet Lord, may'st thou not thank thyself : Ar't thou not Lord of All? Why then must Thou submit to all this? Ah Christians, all this was more than Christ had need to do even as Mediator between You and God : His Death alone had been sufficient to redeem you. But he graciously has made himself not only your Ransom but Example. *I have given you an Example,* says he, *that as I have done, so you also may do.* He was all-pure and spotless; he had no Sins to atone for, nor any rebellious Appetites to subdue, and therefore with regard to himself 'twas needless quite to Fast as he did, to labour as he did, and to torment his tender Flesh with lying hard and poorly as he did. But, ah Christians, it was not needless with regard to you. How necessary 'twas for him to set you this Example appears too plainly from the Reluctance which you still express, to practice any part of this, even after the Example he has shewn you. If Christ had eat, and moved, and slept at ease; how readily would you have pleaded his Example as a Sanction for your present Delicacy. But now you see his practice is quite opposit, what lame

Excuses

Excuses are you forced to bring for not so much as labouring to be like him. He all Purity and Grace would absolutely suffer and be humbled, You all Sin and Concupiscence will not by Choice encounter any Suffering any Humiliation you can fly from. And why forsooth: Christ was the Son of God, and therefore could bear to Fast for forty Days, to toil incessantly, to lye hard; But You have not the Sanctity, nor Strength which he had. Ah Foolish Mortals, how wise you are at deceiving yourselves, and yet how unvaluable are such Wages? Christ was Son of God, nay God himself 'tis true: But then as God he could not suffer nor be humbled, 'twas as Man that he submitted to all this, and as Man he was at least as delicately form'd as you can be, and as infirm as you. 'Tis true that he was Holy; and so may you be, nay so you ought to be, as his Disciples. And if you are not the more reason have you to imitate his Sufferings. 'Tis by so doing alone that you can rise to the Grace of Conversion. *Turn to me, says the Lord, with all your Heart in Fasting, in Sorrow and in Tears.* The Sufferings of Christ were voluntary, he might have exempted himself from them if he had pleased, because he was all Purity and Grace. But the Case, O Mortals, is quite otherwise with you, You are all Sinners
and

and therefore if Christ had never suffer'd any thing during his whole Life, that could have been no sufficient Reason for you to excuse yourselves from satisfying the offended Justice of God, by voluntary Sufferings. Christ had no unruly Passions to subdue: You have; and therefore even if he had lived in constant Ease, Sufferings ought still to be your Pursuit in order to subdue those Appetites which are daily seducing you wide of him. How much more then as matters stand, Christians, must not You be obliged to embrace a Life of Crosses and Humiliations, to atone for your Sins and subdue your Appetites, when your Saviour without any Sins to atone for, any unruly Appetites to subdue, shews you so glorious an Example of the Love of Sufferings in his own Sacred Person? And how can you hope to follow him, how can you shew your Desire of it, but by voluntarily denying yourself and taking up your Cross.

And yet voluntary Crosses, Humiliations of your own seeking are the least in value of all those which your Saviour has set you an Example of in his own Person, and which you must practice after him to shew yourselves his grateful worthy Disciples. Sufferings of your own seeking, I say, are of the lightest Sort; and tho' they are in themselves grateful to God, inasmuch as they
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are supererogatory Sacrifices made to him, yet one Mortification or Humiliation borne for Christ's Sake from Other Persons, is worth a hundred of your own chusing. Because the Crosses of your own Choice are too often like the Fasts of the *Jews* in *Isaiah*, the Gratification of your own Will is your only Motive. Or if your own Will is not your sole Motive it has so great a share in what you do as greatly to blunt the Edge of suffering and consequently to diminish the Merit of it. Whereas those which come to you from GOD, or MAN, require a Denial of that very Will. Now this was not the Case with Christ in his above-mention'd Sufferings. It is true those Sufferings were the Effect of his Choice; but then his very Choice was subject to Obedience, in these and in all the Sufferings he went through, from his Birth to his Death. The Evils which any Person in this Life may be subject to from Other Men by Divine Permission must come either from Friends, or Enemies, or Superiors. Now Your Saviour, Christians, was resolved to suffer by All, that None of you might find any Exceptions against Suffering for his Sake all the Injuries, all the Crosses which any One could load you with. He submitted himself to be circumcised by the High-Priest as his external Superior, subjected himself to the rebukes
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of his Virgin Mother, and even where his Life was at Stake submitted to the Sentence of the Ruling Powers. He chose to suffer the cruel Mortification of being betray'd by one of his Disciples, denied by another, abandon'd by All, and inwardly tortured by the Sight of his Beloved Mother's unspeakable Grief. And what Cruelty and Ignominy he consented to go through from the Hands of his Enemies, his whole Passion and Death are enough to testify, from the Garden to *Mount Calvary*. All this too did he undergo in Obedience to his eternal Father, in Compliance with whose Blessed Will he not only consented to yield up the Ghost for our Sins, Christians, but even to be abandon'd by him to all the Weakness of his human Nature, before he did yield it. In short Brethren to sum up the Whole of this important Truth in few Words, *For us*, says St. PAUL, *Christ was made obedient even to Death, the very Death of the Cross.* And is not this saying enough to convince you, that you cannot be grateful Disciples of Christ without exerting yourselves for his Sake to imitate him in the like Obedience to Crosses and Death when and wherever his Honour shall require it? And how will you ever be in such a Disposition without first passing a final Judgment of Banishment on the World, and casting forth the Prince

Prince of it from your Bosom, by renouncing to the Affection towards all and every of it's deceitful Allurements. Well then may your Divine Saviour tell You, *He, who does not renounce to All things which he possesses, cannot be my Disciple.*

II. And is there any thing in this Condition but what is extremely reasonable. Your Saviour demands You, Christians, to renounce all things for him. Well, is the Demand so grievous? He renounced all for You. Nay he renounced Heaven for a time for your Sake; and all he requires of You in return is, that You renounce the empty Allurements of the Earth for his Sake and your own. Are you not bound then by all the Sacred Ties of Gratitude to make him this little Offering? Can you be his Disciples, or even Friends to yourselves without doing it? Is not your own Interest absolutely concern'd? Nay, properly speaking, who but yourselves has Interest in it?

Christ himself tells you in the Gospel for this Sunday, that *Every-One that exalteth himself shall be humbled, but he that humbleth himself shall be exalted.* St. Paul tells you in the Epistle for the Festival, that this way of Crosses and Humiliation was the very way which Christ himself took to be exalted to his Glory, and that by this

way alone he attain'd to it. For us *Christ was made obedient to Death*, says he, *even the Death of the Cross, and therefore God exalted him*. Your Saviour then proposes nothing to you but what is infinitely to your Advantage; nay nothing but what he has experimented to be so, before he proposed it to You. O the Glory and Exaltation he calls you to is a Part of his own and that is not to be attain'd to but by Crosses and Humiliation. He made it inaccessible, even to himself by any other way, and shall his Disciples then hope to reach that Glory by Means denied to their Divine Master? *Ought not Christ to have suffer'd these things and so to enter into his Glory*. If thou then lovely Lord of Majesty could'st not ascend to thy own proper Glory till lifted thither by the Arms of an ignoble Cross, what chance have we poor Wretches of following thee by any other Path?

No, no the Servant is not greater than his Lord; nor the Disciple more learned than his Master. If your Master could find no smoother Way to Glory, no surer Way to Heaven, than the Cross, in vain you try to find One; by that alone you must expect to follow him thither, and all the Steps you take beside that Path are false, erroneous, and wide of the Mark you Aim at. Do you want to follow Christ to Glory?

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He who will come after me, says Christ, must deny himself and take up his Cross and follow me. Why so? Because, says your Divine Saviour in my Text, I, if I be exalted will draw all things to Myself. Christ then was exalted on the Cross on purpose to draw all of you to himself upon the Cross, and that to exalt You afterwards to his Glory. Because, Every-One that exalteth himself shall be humbled, and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted.

But what is my Saviour talking of? In one place he tells us that the Way to Exaltation is to be humbled first, nay more, he tells us that it was necessary for him to suffer Crosses and Humiliation, and so to be exalted, so to enter into his Glory. What can'st thou mean then heavenly Lord in talking now of being thyself exalted from the Earth in order to draw us all to thee? Is there not something Paradoxical in this? Ah No, Christians, No: 'Tis all divinely of a piece and perfectly consistent. The Holy Evangelist explains to you what Exaltation Christ is speaking of in these Mysterious Words. *I, says Christ, if I be exalted from the Earth will draw all things to Myself. This he said, adds St. JOHN, signifying what Death he should die.* The Exaltation then which Christ here speaks of, is the Perfection of Self-humiliation the

Exaltation on a shameful painful Cross. Christ came to exalt himself, and through himself to exalt Mankind to everlasting Glory, the highest Eminence which human Nature could attain to. How then was this to be affected, but by the most profound Humiliation it could be lower'd to. Accordingly, in being exalted on an ignominious Cross, he stoop'd to the profoundest Humiliation of Shame and Confusion, in order to rise to that summit of Glory. And thus was it that he propos'd to exalt you to the same Blessed Eminence, by drawing, you first to himself, crucified and humbled on an ignominious Tree. Yes, says his Apostle, *Christ suffer'd for us leaving you an Example that you may follow his Steps.* And in this what does your Saviour teach you, but to do like a Wise and skilful Architect, who always sinks the deeper his Foundation in proportion to the Superstructure he designs to rear. Would you then be great, says St. *Augustin*, begin by what is least, begin by lowering yourself in proportion to the sacred Height of Glory you aspire to. Would you be happy with God forever? Crucify your Flesh with your Vices and Concupiscences for a time, for his Sake and after his Example. Take up your Cross and follow him. For *he that doth not take his Cross and follow me is not worthy of me*, says GOD your Saviour. You see then,

O Christians, how much your own Interest is concern'd, as well as God's Honour, in your embracing a Life of Crosses and Humiliation. You cannot partake in his Glory, You cannot be exalted to his Kingdom without humbling yourselves. For *Every-One that exalteth himself shall be humbled*, you cannot humble yourselves, but by suffering your Saviour exalted on his Cross to draw you thither after him. If you do that you will be truly humbled, truly crucified, your Exaltation will be the Perfection of Humility, and your Humiliation will exalt you to a perfect Solidity of Glory. For *if we suffer with Christ*, as St. Paul tells the Romans, why is it but *that we may be also glorified with him*. Upon the Whole, Beloved, it is plain that you cannot be grateful to God, nor Friends to yourselves, without passing the Judgment of Banishment on the World, without casting forth the Prince of the World from your Hearts and Affections, to give place to the Cross of Christ. For you cannot be his Disciples, You cannot be Co-heirs with him to his Glory, without embracing a Life of Crosses and Humiliation after his Example.

But what must these Crosses and Humiliations consist in, you'll say? Ah Christians! How can you ask me such a Question after the plain Description your Lord has given

On the Sixteenth SUNDAY

given You? *Every-One of You that doth not renounce All that he possesseth*, says Christ, *cannot be my Disciple.* The Crosses and Humiliations then which you are to embrace, are the voluntary Renunciation from your Hearts to all earthly Enjoyments and every Affection to them, for his Sake. May you not then have any Goods, any Possessions, any Money Reserve? Yes, Christ himself had and you may have, provided you used them only, not enjoy them, provided your Affection to them is subordinate to your Duty to God, and you are always in a readiness to part with them whenever the Possession of them is inconsistent with your Love to him, or any Impediment to your following him. For so doing you possess them and not possess them, you are truly poor with the Evangelic Poverty the Apostle speaks of, and possessing all things, strictly speaking have nothing. But whatever you possess with Attachment, whatever alienates or retards you from following Christ, that You cannot possess, that You must renounce to for his Sake, or cannot be his Disciples.

Nor are you in this Sense to renounce only to the external Enjoyments of the World, to the Goods of Fortune, but even to all the most endearing Ties of Blood and Nature. *If any Man cometh to me*, says your Saviour, *and hateth not his Father and Mother*

Mother, and Wife and Children, and Brethren and Sisters, yea and his own Life besides; he cannot be my Disciple. But what my God, has't not thou commanded us to love and honour our Parents? Has not thy Apostle commanded Husbands to love their Wives even as Thou dost thy Church? How then are we to hate them? Can we both love and hate at Once? Yes, Christians, a little Discretion will teach You to do both, as St. *Gregory* observes, to love your Parents, Brethren, Consorts, Children and other Relations as Friends, and Partners in your Christian Duty, and yet to hate and shun all Commerce with them, which may any ways retard you in your way to God. This You must do, or cannot be Disciples of Christ. Nay with all this, in vain do you call yourselves his Followers, if You do not more. You must even hate your own Souls, *If any Man will come after me, let him deny himself, take up his Cross and follow me,* adds your Divine Saviour. But ah my Saviour who can do this? Can this be possible. Yes possible it is Christians however difficult. Was it not possible Christ could not, would not expect it? Was it not difficult. What Reward could be due to it? And yet in this lies all the Perfection of Christians. In what then, or how are you to hate yourselves. You are to hate yourselves by renouncing
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to whatever can please you in this Life, to love yourselves in every thing which can make you happy in the Next. You are to hate your mortal Life for the love of your immortal Life. *He who loves his Soul sensually shall lose it, and he who hates his Soul in this World by mortifying it, shall keep it to Life everlasting.* That this will require some Struggle there is no room to doubt. "It is perhaps no hard Task, says St. Gregory, for a Man to give up all his Goods, but to give up himself is not a little difficult. 'Tis very practicable for him to renounce what he has, but to renounce to what he is, *hic Labor hoc opus.* There all the Difficulty lies."

And yet, Beloved, great as the Difficulty may seem, it lessens not your Obligation. Christ has declared it necessary, He has submitted to it for your Sakes, and protests that unless You submit to it for his Sake, You cannot be his Disciples. All the Sacred Ties of Gratitude, and all the Considerations of Interest, then invite you to the embracing this Life of Crosses and Humiliation after the Example of your crucified humble Saviour. For what Rewards may you not expect from him for it? You, says he, who have done all this, *shall receive a hundred-fold and shall possess Life everlasting.* Ah Christians can You then hesitate any longer

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to take up your Cross and follow Christ? You see the Rewards before You: Those Rewards which have fill'd so many Cloisters with Religious, so many Deserts with Hermits, and the Heavens with so many Saints; will they not suffice to fill you with a holy Ardour, a holy Eagerness to be humble and suffer for him who will repay you so liberally? Eye but the greatness of the Recompense with steady Attention and you will think the Task extremely easy; you will be convinced with St. Paul, that *the Sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the future Glory which shall be reveal'd in You.* take Courage then and follow this Apostle's Instructions, that *denying Impiety and wordly Desires, you may live soberly and justly and godlily in this World,* that is, soberly to yourselves, justly to all Men, and Godlily to GOD. Follow your Saviour's Example who for the love of You whereas he was rich, was made poor, lived in continual Indigence and died naked and exposed on a Cross to draw you to himself, that you, by humbling yourselves with him, might be exalted by him.

Keep constantly in view the glorious Premium of your Christian Race, that the infernal Enemy, who is ever labouring to rob you of the Prize by decoying you away from it, may never have his malicious Ends

of You. In struggling with him imitate the Champions of the Stage, who before they pretend to the Combat throw off their Cloaths that their *Antagonist* may have less means to grapple with them. "And what," *says St. Gregory*, are all things on Earth "but like so many Garments of the Body." In resisting the Devil then throw off all your Garments of earthly Affections, that he may not have Power to give you a fall. What do Persons do who are to run a Race? They abstain for some time, they sweat themselves, lower their Weight, and to remove every Impediment to winning the Goal throw off their Cloaths before they start. And are not You, Christians, running a Race of Love for a Crown of Glory. Ought you not then to do at least as much. Ought not You to abstain from the Desires of the Flesh, to sweat it in the Works of Mortification and Mercy, to lower the Weight of your Pride by Humiliation, and to throw off all the Garments of earthly Affections which may hinder or retard You. *If Every-One*, as *St. Paul* remarks, *that striveth for the Mastery refraineth himself from all things: And they indeed that they may receive a corruptible Crown*, how much more ought not you to do it who are striving *for an incorruptible one?* Refrain then, Beloved, from all that is earthly, take up your Cross

Cross alone and follow Christ to the glorious Prize you contend for. *And so run that You may obtain.* If you drag your Cross, you will take it up in vain, for that itself will retard You. But if you carry it cheerfully, willingly, and by Choice, you will find it light, and easy, nay, by humbling You to the true Imitation of your crucified Saviour it will lift you to that Substantial Glory he came to draw You to. For as my Text says, *Every-One who humbleth himself shall be exalted.* And that this may be your Portion. I beg God of his infinit Mercy to grant you. *In the Name, &c.*





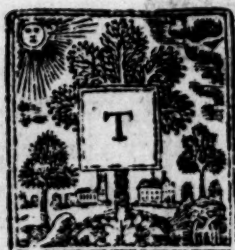
S E R M O N

On the Seventeenth SUNDAY after

P E N T E C O S T.

St. MATTHEW xxii. 37, 38, 39, 40.

Thou shal't Love the Lord thy GOD from thy whole Heart, and with thy whole Soul, and with thy whole Mind. This is the greatest and the first Commandment. And the Second is like to this: Thou shal't Love thy Neighbour as thyself. On these two Commandments dependeth the whole Law and the Prophets.



HAT You are indispensably bound first and before all things to Love and Honour God with a sovereign Affection and Homage, I have already proved to You in one of my former Discourses. And if I had not; the infinit Favours You have received and

and daily continue to receive from him sufficiently speak the greatness of that Obligation. To leave You no room however to plead Ignorance of it, here is a positive Precept to enforce it. *Thou shalt Love the Lord thy GOD from thy whole Heart, and with thy whole Soul, and with thy whole Mind.* And that You may not imagin it to be a mere Occasional Law, or such a One as may be broken through for any Other, Your Saviour tells you, that *This is the greatest and the first Commandment*, and consequently is to take place of all others. And yet the same Divine Lord tells you that there is another as great as this. The Second says he is like to this, *Thou shalt Love thy Neighbour as thyself.* But how can this be, you'll say? If the Love of GOD is the greatest Commandment, how can the Love of your Neighbour be as great? The Solution is very easy, Christians: The Love of GOD is the great End for which you are commanded to Love your Neighbour. For the first Commandment was not given you for the Sake of the Second, but the Second was given you as a Means to enable you to comply with the first. That Precept then of the two which is the End must necessarily be in it's Nature the greatest, the first, and take place in your Affections of the other which is only a Means. And yet as no End

is

is to be obtain'd without the necessary Means conducive to it, whatever Obligation you are under of seeking the End, equally obliges You to lay hold on the necessary Means by which that End is to be attain'd. Wherefore tho' the Precept of loving God be in it's Nature greater than that of loving your Neighbour, Yet Both these Commandments are equally great with regard to the Obligation they lay upon you. In this Sense it is then that Christ, after telling you that the supreme Love of God, *is the greatest and first Commandment*, adds that *the Second is like to this*. For, says he, *on these two Commandments dependeth the Law and the Prophets*.

Two Observations may be drawn from this. The *First* is that, tho' it is possible for you to have an extraordinary deal of Affection for Your Neighbour with very little or no Love for God, yet it is absolutely impossible for You to have any Love at all for God without having a great Love for your Neighbour. The *Second* is that, on one side ever so great a Tendernefs for your Neighbour will not enable you to fulfill this Second Commandment, unless the Desire of shewing your Love to God be the principal Motive of that Tendernefs: And on the other side, however great a Degree of Love you may pretend to have for God, you cannot fulfill the first Commandment, without beginning

ning in practice by the Second; and proving your Love for God by your Love for your Neighbour. Because as your Saviour tells you, *these two Commandments* are the inseparable Pillars on which *dependeth the whole religious Edifice of the Law and the Prophets*. The Consequence of which is, that to fulfill both you must make use of Reason and Grace to set about them. What does every reasonable Man do before he consents to any One Undertaking? *First*, He considers the End he has to propose to himself in doing it, and if the End be eligible he resolves on pursuing it. *Secondly* he consults the Means, and lays hold on those which he finds, upon mature Deliberation, to be the most necessary and sufficient. The End then is the first in Intention, and the Means are the first in Execution. Consult Grace then and ask yourselves, what is and ought to be the Chief End of all your Actions? Grace will answer you that it is the Love of God; That then ought to be the first in your Intention in the Love you bear to your Neighbours, his Creatures. And ask your Reason once enlighten'd by Grace, what are the necessary Means to attain to that End? And You will find that it is the Love of your Neighbour. This then must be the first in Your Practice; even to prove your Love of God.

Now

Now the Case being thus, as I have already endeavour'd to direct your Intention to the right End, by shewing You the greatness of your Obligation to fulfill the first Commandment of loving God with your all and above all; I shall now proceed to recommend to you the practice of the Means by which that End is to be obtain'd, by shewing you,

I. How essentially you are bound to fulfill this other Commandment of loving your Neighbour sincerely: *And*

II. What the Love consists in which you are hereby commanded to practice.

“ O thou dear generous Friend of Human Nature, who for the Love of Man did'st stoop from Heaven to Earth, vouchsafe to be our Guide as well as Law-giver. Recall thy blessed Practice to our Minds, that keeping Sight of thee, we may not be to seek for that fraternal Charity by which alone we can express our Gratitude and pay thee Love for Love. ”

I. To convince you of the greatness of your Obligation to Love your Neighbour, I might content myself with the very Words of this Precept, *Thou shal't Love thy Neighbour as thyself*. The Words are clear, express, positive and will admit of no Exception.

tion. All Men therefore in Virtue of the Obedience they owe to their Sovereign Creator are indispensably bound by this Precept to love all Mankind as themselves. But what may render this Precept so much the more awful are the frequent Occasions which GOD has taken in the Sacred Scriptures to inculcate it. In the *Nineteenth* of *Leviticus*, he tells the Children of *Israel*. *Thou shalt not hate thy Brother in thy Heart, --- But thou shalt Love thy Neighbour as thyself.* And this is the Summary of all the Laws the Almighty gave to them and to us, in the Table of the Ten Commandments, which relate to our Neighbour. For as St. Paul very wisely tells us, in the *Thirteenth* to the ROMANS. *Thou shalt not commit Adultery, Thou shalt not kill, Thou shalt not steal, Thou shalt not bear false Witness, and if there be any other Commandment it is comprised in this Word, Thou shalt Love thy Neighbour as thyself. The Love of thy Neighbour worketh no Evil. Love therefore is the fulness of the Law.* According to St. Paul then the whole Accomplishment of the Divine Law depends upon fraternal Charity. This Sentiment he repeats in many other Passages of his Writings. He tells the *Galatians* that, *all the Law is fulfill'd in one Word, Thou shalt Love thy Neighbour as thyself.* And to the *Colossians* he recom-

mends it above all things, *Above all things have Charity*, says he, *which is the band of Perfection*. Not that St. Paul, any more than the Divine Law-giver meant to enforce the Love of Man as the only Duty of Man; No, he very beautifully expresses the opposit, by telling you that this is not Perfection itself, *but the band of Perfection*, that is, the Condition required on our sides towards obtaining of God the Grace of Perfection in the Accomplishment of the great Law of loving God above all things. In short, it is the Accomplishment of the practical Law, that is the Means towards attaining to the intentional Law, for which those Means were commanded.

Hence it is, that your blessed Redeemer, who came not to break the Law but to fulfill it, ratifies this important Commandment in the Gospel for this Day. *Thou shalt Love thy Neighbour as thyself*. And to imprint it the deeper in the Memory of his Followers, he omits no Opportunity of repeating it. Nay he in one place calls it, by Excellence, his own Precept, as if he meant to insinuate that he came on Earth, chiefly to teach the practice of this. *This is my Commandment that you love One-another as I have loved You*. And at his last Supper before parting with his Disciples he renews it in the strongest Terms. *A new Commandment*

ment I give to you that you love One-another as I have loved You. Ah loving Lord where was the Novelty of this Commandment? Did not thy eternal Father give it to us long before thou did'st vouchsafe to come amongst us; and did'st not thou long before and often repeat it? Yes, Christians, he did. And still the Commandment was new, in this Re-inforcement of it, new in the fresh Example he was going to set them of fraternal Charity, in his blessed Passion, and new, because never to become obsolete and out of date. But O how new indeed will it not be in your Practice, if henceforth you should resolve to fulfill it. For how many are there here who pretend to be Christians, who have not yet so much as once endeavour'd at the practice of it? And yet if you pay the least Attention to the Stress which Christ every where lays upon fraternal Charity, you must confess yourselves under an indispensable Obligation, of fulfilling this great Commandment, to the utmost of your Power, in order to reap any Benefit from his Redemption of you.

What is very remarkable is, that Christ absolutely insists upon your fulfilling this Commandment, as a necessary Proof of your fulfilling that of loving him; and declares it to be the essential Characteristic of a Christian to love his Neighbour. *In this, says*

he, *All Men shall know that you are my Disciples, if you have love one for another,* In vain then do you pretend to be Christians, in vain do you aspire to the great End of Christianity, which is a perfect Love for God, if you neglect the Means, the necessary Condition to attain to it, which is the Love of your Neighbour.

Nothing will make this Truth more evident to You, Christians, than considering the infinit Obligations You have to God, for the immense Love he has express'd to You. Let us reason upon them, then with St. JOHN. *In this bath the Charity of God appear'd in us,* says the Apostle, *that God hath sent his only begotten Son into the World, that we may live by him.* But how can we live by him, without loving and obeying and following him? *Now this Commandment we have from God,* says the Saint, *that he who loveth God, love also his Brother.* My Dearest then, says he, *if God hath so loved us; we also ought to love One-another.* Why so? The Reason is plain from the Apostle's own Word's. We cannot be grateful to God who has loved us so much, without loving him in our Turns; we cannot love God without loving our Neighbour in Obedience to him. We cannot then be grateful to God without loving our Neighbour. *Let us therefore love God,* says this sublime Writer,

Writer, because God hath first loved us. The Love of God then is the Effect of our Gratitude. If we love One-another God abideth in us, and his Charity in us is perfected. The Love of our Neighbour then is a necessary Argument of our Love for God. The Consequence therefore which the Divine Pen-man draws from this is, that, if Any Man say, that I love God, and hateth his Brother, he is a Liar. For he who loveth not his Brother whom he see'th, God whom he see'th not, how can he love.

Nay the Apostle carries the Matter yet farther and proves that, He who loves not his Neighbour cannot be a Child of God, but must be Child of the Devil. In this are the Children of God manifest and the Children of the Devil, says he, Every-One that is not just is not of God, nor he that loveth not his Brother. And how does he prove this, why very invincibly. He who keepeth his Commandments abideth in God, now he cannot be said to keep his Commandments, nor consequently to abide in God who hateth, or loveth not his Brother, because, says the Apostle. This is the Annunciation which you have heard from the Beginning, That you love One-another. Not as Cain who was of the Wicked and kill'd his Brother. Now Every-One who hateth a Neighbour is like Cain. Whosoever, says he,

he, *hateth his Brother is a Murderer. And You know that no Murderer hath Life everlasting abiding in himself.* Thus strenuously does this Sacred Writer argue in Favour of fraternal Charity and so plainly does he prove his Assertion that, He who is wanting in fraternal Charity cannot be a Child of God, but renders himself the Child of Satan, *and abideth in Death*, by becoming as much as in him lies a Murderer of his Fellow-Creature the Image of his Creator.

To render the latter part of which more evident I shall just give You a little Notion of the Nature of Love and Hatred; and to do this we must consider them abstractedly as they are in God himself. The Love of God then it was which created You what you are. The Extension of his Divine Goodness to you (while you was as yet nothing) it was, which extracted you from that Chaos and gave you an Existence. And if God was totally to withdraw that Communication of his Goodness from you, that would be the opposit Act, which we should call Hatred. And such a Hatred would sink you again into your primitive State of Nothing. Now the Love of Creatures and there Hatred are alike finite, and therefore incapable of creating, or annihilating. But that is not for want of the Goodwill. The Man who loves an Object invests
it

it in his Imagination with all the Excellencies he is able to communicate to his Ideas of it. Or the Man who hates, or does not love, does all he can by so doing, to annihilate the Person he hates in his Thoughts, or Affection. And if GOD hated the same Person with the same Degree of Hatred, or loved him no more, the Person must become Nothing indeed. In not loving your Neighbour therefore, if you do not annihilate him in fact, there are no thanks due to you. You mentally murder him, and therefore according to the Rule Your Saviour has set down, *the same measure you measure to him, shall be measured to You again.* GOD will annihilate You as much as is consistent with the immortal Nature he has given you, by banishing you from his Divine Affections, as you do your Neighbour from your Love, and *you will abide in Death*, the eternal Death of his avenging Justice. Of such dreadful Consequence is it to hate a Brother. And so plain is it that you are under the greatest indispensable Obligation of fulfilling this Second Commandment, *Thou shalt Love thy Neighbour as thyself*, since you cannot fulfill the other of loving GOD, with your All, and above All, without this.

II. The next Question then will be in what that Love must consist which you are
to

to practice to your Neighbour. The Love then which you are to bear to your Fellow-Creatures must in the first place be an active fruitful Love. To wish to your Neighbour the Good he wants can do him very little Service if you, content with that, slothfully neglect to do all which is in your Power towards doing him that Good. Good-wishes are a necessary Part of Brotherly Love, but much the least and very far from being sufficient where You can do more. Nay, where you can do more than Wish and do not do it, Your pretended Wishes, your affected Good-will is not sincere; 'tis mere Dissimulation. When *Lazarus* lay sick of that Illness which was the Cause of his first Death, his Sisters knowing the Love which Christ had for him and how much it was in this Divine Person's Power to cure him, they sent to him this short but expressive Message. He Lord, *be whom thou lovest is sick*. They added Nothing more as *St. Augustin* takes notice, to engage him to come. No: All they could add was Needless to a real sincere Love like Christ's, it consisted not in bear Good-wishes, it wanted nothing but an Occasion of doing the Beloved Object real effectual Good. The Occasion offers, and the Good is done. Such then, Beloved, must your Love to your Neighbour be, you must extend all the
 Good.

Good you wish to your Brethren, to the practice of that Good, as far as in you lies. Wherefore, says St. JOHN, *My little Children let us not love in Word, nor in Tongue, but indeed, and in Truth.*

Now the Qualities with which You ought to accompany the external Acts of your Love to your Neighbour are beautifully described by St. Paul to the CORINTHIANS. *Charity, says he, is patient, is kind: Charity envieth not, dealeth not perversely: Is not puff'd up. Is not ambitious, seeketh not her own, is not provoked to Anger, thinketh not Evil, rejoiceth not upon Iniquity, but rejoiceth with the Truth: Suffereth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, beareth all things. Charity never falleth away.* According to St. Paul then, to render your Love for your Neighbour a truly Christian Charity, you must accompany all the good Offices you do him with Meekness, and without regard to his Inability to make you any returns, you must readily serve and assist him, with Patience, waiting for the better Rewards which God has in store for you. You must not envy your Neighbour the little Advantages you see him possess of, nor deal perversely with him, to rob him of, or embitter this Enjoyment of those Advantages. Your Charity if it be real will not puff you up to any Esteem of yourselves preferably to Others,

but will curb your Ambition of seeing above your Fellow-Creatures; will restrain your Sallies of Anger, when he either seems to give, or really does give you any Affronts, or ill Usage; and will lead you always to think the best of him and to put the best Construction on his Words and his Actions which they will any ways bear. Your Charity in a word if it be sincere and effectual will never suffer you to rejoice in any Evil, any Mortification, or Disappointment which the worst of your Enemies can meet with, but will make you share in the Joy of every true Advantage, or Pleasure which the least of your Fellow-Creatures may be sensible of. For 'tis the Nature of Charity to suffer all things for and from a Brother with cheerfulness and Patience, to believe all things favorable to him, to hope all things for him which may be beneficial to him, and to bear a part in all his Misery as well as Happiness, and that with a steady Perseverance: For *Charity never falleth away*, nor slackens by length of time, but grows more vigorous the more it is exercised. Such are the essential Properties, Beloved, of that Affection which God by this *Second Great Commandment* obliges you to exert towards your Neighbour. Such is the Love you require from others to yourself, and therefore nothing less will do from you to them. For this is
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the Will of God that You love your Neighbours as yourselves.

However to carry your fraternal Charity to Perfection, You must go a step farther and love One-another even as God has loved You. Now in this, says St. JOHN, *we have known the Charity of GOD, that, he hath yielded his Life for us; and we ought to yield our Lives for the Brethren.* To be then in a perfect Charity with your Neighbours, Christians, You must be in a readiness of Mind and Heart to lay down your Lives for them. This your Saviour did for you, and this you must be disposed to do, or you cannot be his Disciples, you cannot perfectly fulfill his Precept of Charity. *This is my Precept,* says he to You, *that You love One-another even as I have loved You.* Ah! dearest Saviour if thou did'st shew thy love to us with such a sweet Excess, without regard to any want of Merit in us, can it be much for us to shew our love to thee, in loving for thy Sake and in Obedience to thee, what thou has't render'd lovely by stamping on it, ours, nay more, thy own dear blessed Likeness; and render'd immensely valuable by thy precious Blood? Can we refuse for love of thee to yield our Lives for our Brethren, when Thou for them and us has't generously yielded first thy own?

To love your Neighbour as Christ has loved You, you must love them without Exception of Friends, of Strangers, of Enemies, and must love them to the End of Life. Tho' your Charity should be extended to all Mankind during the Major part of Life; tho' you should have spent your Life like the charitable *Tobias* in visiting the Imprison'd, in relieving the Sick, in burying the Dead, and practising Hospitality to Strangers; tho' with *Job* you should spend the Flower of your Days, in instructing many, in strengthening Weak hands, in upholding him that was fallen, and in strengthening the knees of the feeble; still if at the End of Life you grow faint, if you suffer your Charity to slacken, if you break with one single Neighbour and withdraw your love from him, or retain a mortal Grudge to him; All your former Charities are Nothing, like a giddy senseless Heifer which kicks the Milk it has plentifully yielded; you render all your Brotherly Love fruitless, and cannot be said to love your Neighbour as Christ loved you, *Who*, as St. *John* tells you, *whereas he had loved his that were in the World, to the End he loved them.* It is Perseverance then, Perseverance alone which can render your fraternal Charity perfect, by likening it to that of Christ.

All

All that were in the World were given to him, and his that were in the World, he loved, not for a time, but to the End of his blessed Life, and that without Distinction of Acquaintance or Strangers, Friends or Enemies. As Man, they were all Neighbours to him, and therefore his Love was perfectly extended to all. The Centurion, the Canaanite, the Samaritan were Strangers, and yet they were his Neighbours and therefore he loved them, but how did he shew this love? By removing their Grievances, flying to their Relief, and yielding them spiritual as well as temporal Comfort. His blessed Mother was his Friend, his Disciples were his Friends, his holy Church was his Friend, and how did he express his Love to them as such? Why the first he raised to the highest Pitch of Glory, the other he instructed in his Sacred Mysteries, fortified with his Grace and Love, and made his Ministers to spread his Faith through the World, giving them the Power of Miracles to confirm their Authority; And to the last he sent his Holy Spirit, the Comforter, the Spirit of Truth to guide it into all Truth to the End of the World. This, Christians, this is love indeed. But ah, Christians, is your love like this? In what does your Love to your Friends consist, beyond a Visit, a Smile, a Treat, or a trivial Present, or Service,

vice, perhaps, with little or no Pains or Cost to yourselves, and perhaps not without the View and Expectation of an ample Return? Which of your Friends, as you call them, do you labour to instruct and improve in Piety and heavenly Knowledge? Which of them, when they are sick, or become poor or distressed, are you officious to relieve at the Expence of your own Ease and Conveniences? No: Enough it is that their Circumstances decay, that they come to stand in need of your Assistance, for you to forget your former Friendship, shun their Company and treat them with the same Coldness and uncharitable Indifference which you have so long practiced towards Strangers in want, that you now begin to think it no breach of Duty. And yet if you love not the greatest Stranger in want, enough to relieve his Distress to the utmost of your Power you are not Christ's Disciples: For you do not fulfill his Precept of loving One-another even as he has loved you. But still You pretend to love all Mankind, to be in Friendship with all Men, and to be desirous of fulfilling this Precept to the utmost of your Power. But to convince yourselves whether You do or not, hear what St. John says, *He that shall have the Substance of the World, and shall see his Brother have need and shall shut his Bowels from him,*

him, how doth the Charity of God abide in him. Ah Christians, how then can you fulfill this great Law while you see your Fellow-Creature in any Distress and take no pains to afford him Succour? Not at all says St. *Augustin*: "He who has no Clemency
" and is not possess'd of Bowels of Mercy
" even to melting into Tears at the Sight
" of a suffering Neighbour, fulfills not the
" Law of Christ." How unlike is he in fact to that tender Lord who could not refrain from Tears at the Death of *Lazarus*. But O thou Fountain of all Joy why did'st thou weep, at the Distress which thou camest to remove, but at these of so many relentless Mortals who could behold in others the Miseries themselves were subject to and behold them with dry Eyes and an unrelenting Heart? Ah, Beloved, is not this the deplorable Hardness of many here? Suppose I should shew you two poor Ancient Creatures, once as well to pass as any of you all, now miserably poor, one Blind, the other Lame, both Sick, both Hungry, and half Naked, now reduced to Beggary, by once renouncing to Affluence for the love of Christ and his Faith; once courted and caress'd as some of You are, now abandon'd by All but Vermin which their native Cleanness cannot free them from: Suppose I should but tell you one half of what they undergo

undergo I might perhaps offend your delicate Stomachs, but should I draw one Tear from your unpitying Eyes, one Sigh from your impenetrable Hearts, or one faint Wish to succour and relieve them? Who of you all would ask me their Abode to pay them one consoling Visit? Who of you all would send a little thing to cherish them? Or which of you all would throw in one Mite from your superfluous Expences towards keeping them from perishing? But why do I say so? No, thanks to the Divine Grace, you have more Charity than this. 'Tis your Charity which actually supports them, by your Bounty they are fed. And for your Prosperity are all their Prayers directed.

But ah, Christians, what will all this Bounty signify, what will all these Prayers avail You, if at the same time as you part with your Money to these, you part not with the Grudge you retain against any offending Brother? For while You do this You fulfill not the Law of Christ, *which is that, you love One-another even as he hath loved you.* He not only did good to his Friends and to Strangers among you, but even to such of you as were his profest Enemies. And all this he did, as St. Peter tells you, *leaving you an Example that you may follow his Steps who when he was reviled did*

did not revile, when he suffer'd he threaten'd not, but deliver'd himself up to, and even for him who judg'd him unjustly. All your Charities then to your Friends and to Strangers will avail you nothing, unless you extend your fraternal Love even to such of your Neighbours as you think to be your Enemies.

Perhaps, Christians, you flatter yourselves that you do even this. But ah! Heaven grant that it be not mere Flattery. For what Proofs do you give of your Love to them? You'll tell me that you remember them daily in your Prayers. You do well, but if you do no more, alas you deceive yourselves. Tell me, you who pray for your Enemies, do you retain no Grudge to them, do you not shun their Company, and that more from a dislike to their Persons, than from any fear of their hurting You? Are you not even ready to break with such of your Friends as will not break with them? Do you not hate to hear them well-spoken of? If you do not hurt, speak ill of them yourselves, do you not feel a secret Satisfaction at every slight thing said of them, every Disappointment or Mortification they meet with? Can you then be Disciples of Christ? Can you be said to fulfill his Commandment? Can you truly Love your Neighbour as Christ loved you, who died for you

tho' his Enemy, pray'd for you tho' his Persecutor, and excuses you to his eternal Father even while your Crimes nail him to a painful shameful Cross? But they have injured me, You cry, they have done me Injustice. Doubtless they have, or You would have nothing to forgive. But O my Saviour, what Justice was it which loaded thee with such Cruel Treatment as thou did'st meet with throughout thy Passion? Was it no Injury to make thee bleed on an ignoble Tree, between two Thieves as a notorious Malefactor, thou in whom no Guile was found? And yet Dear Lord thou did'st not only forgive them from thy Heart, who did thee all this Injury and Injustice, but did'st even pray for them to thy eternal Father, excuse them, nay die for them. Can you then, Christians, refuse to do as much for those who injure you, and yet be Christians? Can you fulfill this great Commandment and Love your Neighbour as Christ has loved You, without forgiving from your Hearts, your worst, your most, inveterate Foes.

Yes, You will tell me, may be, You forgive them from your Hearts and wish them well, and surely that is enough. Surely there can be no Obligation to heap Favours on the Ungrateful. Ah! loving injured Lord, had'st thou thus reason'd with regard
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to us, what must have become of us? Thou well did'st know what an ungrateful Use we should make of all thy Sufferings, Death, and Graces. And O if that had been sufficient to induce thee to confine thy Pardon to a negative Affection and unactive Love, what could have saved us from the eternal Vengeance due to our Offences? No, Christ has pardon'd you innumerable Injuries and, so must you forgive Your Brother from your Hearts; or you cannot fulfill this Commandment.

Had I the Time and You the Patience, I could add a thousand other Arguments to prove the Greatness of your Obligation to love your Neighbour as yourself, and love him as Christ has loved You. But as I design to treat again upon this Subject in my next Discourse. I shall conclude at present only with observing that, what I have already said might more than suffice to convince the most refractory of you All, that You cannot fulfill the first Duty of loving God above all things, without complying with this second equal Obligation of loving your Neighbour as yourselves. And to do this your Love must be effectual, Active, and extended to all the Charity of Action, Word and Wish, which you can practice towards Strangers, Friends or Enemies, without Exception: And that not for a

time but to the End of Life. So Christ express'd his Love for you, and in so doing You must prove your Love for him. The Love which he requires of you is his due: In that consists the fulfilling of all Justice. That is the End for which you are to love your Neighbour. And this the necessary Means to reach that End. *For on these two Commandments dependeth the whole Law and the Prophets.* May God then grant you Grace in this Life to fulfill them, that you may reap the Glory promised to such as do so, in the next. Which I beg of his infinit Mercy, *In the Name, &c.*



SERMON



S E R M O N

On the Eighteenth SUNDAY after

P E N T E C O S T.

St. MATTHEW ix. 5, 6, 7.

Whether is it easier to say, thy Sins are forgiven thee : Or to say, arise and Walk. But that you may know that the Son of Man hath Power on Earth to forgive Sins, then said he to the sick of the Palsy, Arise, take up thy Bed and go into thy House, and he arose and went into his House.



OUR Saviour then, Beloved, had the Power and the Will to forgive. Here is a signal Proof of it. A Man is brought to him, for Relief, externally loaded with the bodily Affliction of a Palsy. And who should this be but one whose inward Guilt has been the Cause of all he suffers?
Well

Well then, dear Lord, thou see'st this miserable Man before thee, who often has presumed to offend thee by his sinful Life, and still perhaps would rashly dare to offend thee on but that thy Vengeance, overtaking him in this Disease, has humbled him to sue to thee for Pardon, now his unactive Limbs have lost the ease of Sinning. And can'st thou, wil't thou, injured JESUS, pardon one who set thee at Defiance as long as he had Power so to do? Yes, says your Saviour, *Have a good Heart, Son, thy Sins are forgiven thee.* Ah! Lord of Mercy, so we hear thee say, and what thou say'st we must believe. But ah, this is not all which is implored of thee? 'Tis easy to pronounce Forgiveness. Even we can say without much Difficulty I forgive. But who can stifle, or withhold the Consequences of Resentment? And without this what signifies Forgiveness? If then thou meanest more by Pardon than mere outward shew, vouchsafe to make us sensible in what it must consist, and how it must appear. *That you may know that the Son of Man hath Power on Earth to forgive Sins*, says Christ, turning to the Sick of the Palsy, *Arise, take up thy Bed and go into thy House.* And he arose and went into his House. Thus, Christians, thus it was that Christ express'd Forgiveness to Offenders. He shew'd not his

Forgiveness

Forgiveness in mere empty Speeches, but in the stifling of Resentment. Those whom he pardon'd, he pardon'd in good earnest, forbore to punish, restored again to all their former marks of his Affection, and loaded with fresh Favours. And so must You behave to such as sin against yourselves, if you are his Disciples. Think not to excuse yourselves from this important Duty by pretending that You cannot do it. If you, like Christ your heavenly Master, have but the Will, you'll find the Practice in your Power. For he was Man and Son of Man as well as you; and tho' on this occasion he call'd his Godhead to his Assistance for the Effect of his Forgiveness; yet it was at last to prove and make you know, *that the Son of Man hath Power* as well as the Son of God *to forgive the Sins*, committed against himself. In short this as well as all the Miracles your Saviour wrought throughout his Life, was design'd by him a practical Lesson to lead you to the perfect Love of God, by a compleat Charity towards your Neighbour. And therefore to apply it the more closely he tells you soon after. *Go your ways*, says he, *and learn what it is, I will Mercy, and not Sacrifice.* Ah! Christians, not all the Prayers, the Fasts, the Sacrifices you can offer to him, will be acceptable, if Mercy to One-another is left out. And even this
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to be an Offering worthy his Acceptance must be extended to all Mankind, to Friends, to Strangers, and to Enemies, without Exception of one Person, without Exclusion of one friendly Office in your Power. This is the solemn Truth which in my last Discourse, I labour'd to convince you of. However, then I only reason'd to your Understandings: --- Whereas now I shall endeavour to parley with your Hearts, and spirit them up to this essential Duty from Principles of Gratitude, by dwelling a little on the infinit Mercies which God has shewn to You all, and which You have no other Means to be grateful to him for, than by practising Mercy to all Mankind for his Sake and to the utmost of your Power. To do this then I shall shew you,

- I. The great Tenderneſs of Affection you ought to bear to your Neighbours, as well Strangers, as Friends, in the immense Love which your God has expreſs'd to you: *And*
- II. I ſhall give you a Sample of the much and perfect Forgiveneſs you ought to practice to your offending Neighbours, in the infinit repeated Mercies of God in pardoning you.

Whence if your Souls, which Heaven avert, be not flinted into Obduracy; you will

will be able to see, how easy you may make both these Duties to you in the practice and how dear you ought to make them.

“ But thou alone, dear Lord, can’st melt
 “ the Hearts of these my Hearers with the
 “ important Truths I utter. In vain I toil
 “ to plant or sow thy Sacred Doctrin, un-
 “ less thou waterest with thy Grace the
 “ Soil. O give thou then the encrease and
 “ kindly warm the Souls of all here present
 “ with that fraternal Charity I preach, and
 “ by which only they can yield the Fruits
 “ of thy eternal Life.”

I. Mankind have no other Means of expressing their Love and Gratitude to God for the immense Love and Charity he has shewn to them, than by practising all the Acts of Mercy and Charity in their Power towards One-another. However common that Proverb may appear, it still is an eternal Truth that, *one good Turn deserves another.* Every Favour then, which God at any time bestows on any Man, lays him under an indispensable Debt of Gratitude and Equity, to make God all the return he is capable of. And God’s eternal Justice absolutely requires him to exert his utmost Industry to do it. But this he cannot do in

coin, if I may use that Term; *that is*, Man cannot do to God, the Good which God has done to him, nor indeed any real Good. The infinit Excellence of the Almighty's Nature places him infinitely above the reach of human Benefits. And yet the Obligation Man is under is equally subsisting, and therefore with regard to the Divine Favours he is born, and lives, and must die an Insolvent Debtor. However, one of the ineffable Favours God has bestow'd upon us useless Servants is the having, with his Grace which is ever at our call, the Power and Free-will to do some Good: And therefore as that Good is a real and positive Action, it must have a real and positively passive Object to terminate in. For all the Good that is or can be done, must be communicative and Some must reap the Advantage of it. God as I have observed is too immensely happy in himself, from all Eternity to reap Advantage from the Good he requires us to practice in return for the Good he has done us, and therefore is it that he mercifully substitutes our Neighbours to receive the Benefit: That we may have it in our Power to repay him thus, the Debt we owe him, and reap the Benefit of Each-others Gratitude to him. This then is the Return, which God demands of You for all the infinit Good he

has

has done You, that for his Sake you *Love One-another even as he has loved You*. And this, you see, is the only Means you have to prove yourselves grateful to him for that Love. And O my God, how many and great, are not the Proofs which thou hast given us of thy ineffable Affection!

Thousands, Christians, Millions, nay innumerable and infinit are the Benefits your loving Lord has bestow'd on You. His Love is not the Love merely of Words but a Love of Action. In God it is one and the same thing, to wish well and do it. And this Love it was, which gave You the Being you enjoy, stamp'd on it his own Likeness, and enrich'd it with all that might make it a happy Creature. He gave you an immortal Soul, and endow'd it with, Will, Memory, and Understanding; He gave you a Body and assisted it with Life, Spirits, and Sensation; and form'd both to be instrumental to Each-other's Felicity. In return for this, it is true You cannot create any other Beings like yourselves, that is an Action which requires an infinit Power, and You are but finite limited Creatures yourselves, and therefore that is a Return which is not expected from You. But surely, You may make use of the little limited Power and Faculties you have to contribute as much as in you lies, to the Happiness of those

other Beings, which God has created along with you, and with the design that they should be as happy as yourselves. Surely then, your thwarting their Happiness or neglecting any thing in your Power to promote it, must be a Contradiction to the ineffable Design of God in creating you, and them, and but a base ungrateful Use of the Being which God has so graciously given you for that End.

It was the infinity of his Love for You, Beloved, which induced him to exert his Omnipotence in the Production of so many stupendous Works of Nature. Why did he create the Heavens, the Earth, the Waters, the Planets, the Fields, the Animals, and all that is beneath you, but for your Use and Delight. Nay, all Mankind besides were made for your Sake, and you for theirs, that you might enjoy the Pleasure and Benefits arising from Society. All these are the beauteous Works of your good God, all these are the kind Effects of his Almighty Love for You. He had no Advantage to propose to himself, his Heaven was eternally in himself, and his own Divine Imensity is sufficient for him and his Angels, without any other Existence. For your Sakes then were all these created. All are the Benefactions of that great Lord, who, in Love with you, chose to express his Love
by

by this vast profusion of Favours to you; that you, overcome by this Excess of Bounty, might strive to correspond to so much Affection, by making a kind of grateful exchange, and rendering for his Sake all the earthly Advantages you receive from him, common to all your Fellow-Creatures. For, O my God, surely thy immense Wisdom and Goodness did not create this vast and spacious Earth for but a few of us poor reptil Creatures, to shut alone in and elbow others out of? No, thou designed'st it for the use of all, that all might socially unite in sharing mutually thy Benefits with One-another. And O how numberless are the Benefits, Beloved, which God bestows upon you all, without Distinction, to enable you to answer this great End; Many of which are hidden from you, and many unreflected on; not to mention the many and almost infinit Number of those you are sensible of, and yet have never thank'd him for, nor shewn the least acknowledgement of! What more could your amorous Lord do to induce you to love him than he has done? What less could he demand of you in proof of your Love than to do that good to One-another which he affords you Power and Means to do, and which he is above receiving himself?

So

So great is the Affection your Almighty Sovereign bears you, that not content with heaping Favours on you as his Creatures, he even vouchsafed to stoop his Glory to accept of You for Friends; and to cement a strict Alliance with you graciously enter'd into a Covenant of Love with you, by which you might partake with him of his eternal Bliss. Nay, after you had foolishly and basely forfeited his Friendship he sent his only begotten Son to re-instate you in it, at the immense Expence of his most painful Death. O my too loving God what could'st thou see in us poor vile ignoble Wretches, so worthy of thy Love that thou could'st stoop thy awful Majesty, and that of thy eternal Son, to court our Friendship. What Pleasure, or what Benefit, could'st thou propose from such a mean Alliance as that of Worms like us? Ah! Christians, God was too happy in himself from all Eternity before all things were created, to want any thing from you. He generously chose you for his Friends, that you might in return for so much Goodness be Friends to another for his Sake. *You are my Friends,* says your disinterested Lord, *if you do what I command you.* And what does he command you more, as a proof of your corresponding to his Friendship but that, *You love One-another even as he has loved You.*
And

And how, Beloved, how has he loved you as his Friends? Why, by assisting and helping you to all which affords you Safety, Ease, Profit, and delight Eternal, and even Temporal. You yourselves are possessors of Nothing in, or out of yourselves that is good in any Sense but what immediately derives from God. By him it is, you are, and move, and live, and breathe, you can do nothing, say nothing, think nothing, nor wish for any thing, but in and by him. 'Tis he that guards you sleeping and watches with you when awake; that gives Success to what you undertake or comforts you in Disappointments. From him alone comes all your Means of Sustenance, and all the Pleasures you enjoy. In short, on all sides he most graciously besieges you with Favours to make your obstinate unyielding Hearts melt into Love for him. And all the Proofs which he demands is, that you should for his Sake force on your Friends as he has done on you, the little Favours you have in your Power to bestow, in lieu of his immense Ones.

Immense Ones indeed, and had they been no more than those I now have mention'd; all the Affection you could shew him would be little. But ah, to how much greater an Excess did he not carry his Affection? When you had forfeited that Bliss
for

for which he made you, he spared no Cost to re-instate you in your former right, and prove himself your Friend, by the most signal Instance which a God could give. To effect this then he sent his only begotten Son to ransom you that You might live by him. O inimitable Goodness of my God! To remedy your Evils he pay'd not down the Life of an Angel, a Seraphim or a whole Legion of Seraphic Spirits. No: So well he loved you, O Mortals, that he disbursed what was worth more than the united Lives of all the Choirs of Heaven. He scorn'd to give less than something of his own, nay something of himself; and that no less a something than his eternal Son, of as immense a Value as his Godhead. Him he gave up without the least Interest to himself, and him he exposed to the cruel ignominious Death of the Cross, for the pure Love of you, whom he vouchsafed to look upon as Friends. And with what chearful readiness did not this Son of God submit to all the Sufferings and Humiliation which Savage Cruelty could load him with! And all to shew you how much you ought to do for One-another. No Man, says this your loving Lord, can have a greater Charity for his Friends, than he who lays down his Life for them. And yet, even here your gracious Benefactor could not stop,
but

but even went so far as to leave that precious Blood for a perpetual Source of Grace and Helps for you. O Liberality unbounded! O unexhausted Fountain of prodigious Love! Ah! Where is the created Monarch, who would devote to Death his guiltless only Son, a Son he loved to the utmost extent of Tenderness, for mere Friendship to his Vassals? Where is the Prince who generously would offer to seal a Friendship between a Father and his Subjects, with his Blood? Where is the Man who would consent to part with but one Cup of his superfluous Blood to quench the Thirst of those he loved the most? Yet this Your God and Saviour graciously have done for you and me. Ah! Shall our Souls not melt then, Christians, and be dissolved with grateful Love for him? Shall God then, after having proved his Love for us by such stupendous Charity, only demand of us the slight return of *loving One-another* to the utmost of our Power, *even as he has loved us*; and shall we have the Power to refuse him this little Proof of Gratitude? What tho' we gave up all we have in Charity to others; what tho' we gave up all our Time, and Ease, and Liberty, and Persons, to Acts of Mercy, to our Neighbours. What tho' in a word, we Sacrifice our Lives for them; can we do too much to correspond to such a love as God

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has shewn to us? Tho' every single Life of ours was worth the Lives of all the Angels; and Every-one of us should Sacrifice that Life for one single Man; yet would the Victim we should offer fall infinitely short of the invauable Sacrifice which God first made for us. His was the infinit Benevolence of a gracious God to his unserviceable Creatures; ours would be at last but a finit Acknowledgment to God of the infinit Debt we owe him.

Alas then, Christians, how can you without trembling think on your deficiency of Love for God, in return for the infinit Love he has express'd for you? You have no Means to shew your Gratitude to him but by the love you express to One-another. With what tender Affection then ought you not to love and serve your Friends, your Acquaintance, and all Mankind? How eager ought you not to be to serve, assist, and comfort them, to rejoice with them in their innocent Pleasures, to condole with, and compassionate them in their Sorrows, to relieve them when Needy, to visit them when Sick or Imprison'd, to instruct them when Ignorant, to counsel them when Faulty, to hide and excuse their failings to yourselves and Others, to publish their just Praise; in a word, to do all the good Offices for them, in your Power and to avoid all that in you lies

lies the giving them any just Offence. Can You do less than this for the Sake of him who has done so much for you? Every-one of the infinit Favours which God has bestow'd upon you is a Debt you owe him, and his Divine Justice demands all the Return you can make. Since then, you are incapable of doing him the Good he has done to you, and since he has transferr'd his Right in all the Advantages of the little Good you can do, to your Neighbours, as he cannot Benefit by it himself, surely the least you can do is in Love and Obedience to him, to do them all the Good you can. This he has declared his positive Will, this he insists on as the essential Proof of your Gratitude to him, and this he declares to be the only Means you have of shewing that you belong to him. *In this shall all Men know that you are my Disciples, if you have love for One-another.*

How then can you, Beloved, pretend to be Disciples of your loving Saviour; how can you shew your Gratitude to your beneficent God, if you can see his Images, your Neighbours whom he has commanded You to love, suffering and not relieve them, naked and not cloath them. What is your Charity if you can know of so many of your Fellow-Creatures in Prison, and never set your Foot within one to visit them, hear

of so many Widows and Orphans, hungry and buried in Ignorance, and put yourselves to no inconvenience to feed or instruct them? Will bare Good-wishes, think you, suffice to Discharge your Duty of loving all these as Christ loved you? If he had confined his Friendship for You to bare inactive Wishes, O how much more miserable would you not, must you not be, than the most Wretched of those your Fellow-Creatures, whom you look down on with so much Contempt and Neglect.

But perhaps, to your Friends, Beloved, your own Good-nature will incline you to be Charitable. As for the rest, you cry, they are None of your Acquaintance, you never heard of them before. Or else they are Strangers, they are Foreigners, they agree not with you in Religion, in Politics, or you like not their Character. Alas are their Distresses less for that, or are you less bound to love them with the tender Bowels of fraternal Charity? Ah! No: 'Tis the vain Excuse of your own hard Hearts. Whatever Religion, Nation, or personal Worth, a Person in Distress be of, he is still your Neighbour, still the Image and Creature of God, whether known to You or not. If he is virtuous you relieve one of God's Favorites; if he is vicious you may gain a Soul to God, and whether it does or does not,
by

by preserving him from perishing, you do no more than what the Mercy of God sets you an Example of, who *causes his Sun to shine on the Good and the Bad, and raineth upon the Just and the Unjust.* All Mankind then Good or Bad, Acquaintance or Strangers, are your Fellow-Creatures, are Images of your eternal Benefactor, and they are intitled to all the Charitable Offices you can render them in Gratitude to him. To love your Neighbours with that Charity which God has express'd to you, you are to love them for his Sake, without regard to any amiable Qualities in them. For what amiable Qualities did God find in you, when first he vouchsafed to love you? It was when you was buried in the dark Abyss of Nothing, that God cast his beneficent Eyes upon you; and what has no Being cannot appear lovely nor draw the Affections of any. Nevertheless in this poor despicable Situation he stoop'd to love you, and moved to Affection for you, drew you from thence, to enrich you with Life and many natural Gifts. Still when you came into the World what was you in his Sight, but a foul Vessel of Original Sin, Yet he carried on his Affection for you, wash'd you with his precious Blood, cloath'd you with his Grace, and fed you with his sacred Body. Ah my God, what an Excess of Love was this to Strangers, to Wretches,

Wretches, to Worms, void of all that is lovely, full of all that is odious in thy Sight ! For shame then, Christians, forbear to talk of Strangers, alledge not such frivolous Excuses for your scandalous want of Charity. None of all your Fellow-Creatures can be more Strange, or have less to recommend them to you, than You to God before you were created, before You were regenerated : And ah ! Heaven grant that this be not true, in some Sense, with regard to many of you, even now. Alas too many of you, I fear were not only estranged from God, from the very Wombs of your Mother, but are even so now. For what Numbers of Christians may not God complain of, as he did of the Jews, *these People honour me with their Lips, but their Hearts are far from me.* And yet which of all you, whose Hearts are estranged from God, in your criminal Pursuits, find his Mercy totally estranged from you ? Does he not still protect you, still provide for you, still visit you with his Inspirations and calls to Repentance ; and, as slow in Anger as he is terrible in Wrath, does he not still preserve you from dying in the reprobate Condition you are in, in hopes of overcoming your Obstinacy with Goodness ? With what Face then can You refuse to practice Works of Mercy to such of your Fellow-Creatures as stand
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in need of your Assistance, with the pretext of their being Strangers, or wanting any amiable Qualities to recommend them to your Love? Know you not, that God has transferr'd to Every-one of your Fellow-Creatures his own right in all the Advantages of the Good you are able to do in return for his Love. Can you forget that he has told you, that *what you do to the least of them you do to him*. So impossible then is it for you to be grateful to him without bearing an unbounded Affection to all Mankind, Strangers as well as Friends.

I had almost said Enemies too: And if I had; I should not have exceeded the Truth. The Instance I have just given you of God's Patience with such of you as are actually so, is of itself sufficient to prove that you cannot love One-another as he has loved you, without practising a sincere and perfect Charity even to the worst of your Enemies. But O my God, is there any need for to suffer any longer the Ingratitude of us sinful Wretches, to prove thy Excess of Love to us, even when thy basest Enemies? No, Christians, was he for the future to thunder down his Vengeance upon every Sinner, in the very Instant of his offending him, the many and prodigious Instances he has already given of his Forgiveness to you, after so often and grossly insulting him, would be
more

more then sufficient to lay an eternal Obligation on you of practising the nicest Charity to your Neighbours, let them injure you ever so grievously and ever so often. It must be own'd that God has signalized his Love for you, to the utmost Excess, in suffering so many Affronts and Insults as every one of your Sins amount to. Surely, I say, it must be own'd that his Love for you is unlimited, since he could and would forgive so many base Injuries from miserable Worms like us. God is not insensible of the heinousness of them, he sees them all, in all their Horror, knows how opposit they are to the Greatness of his Majesty; he eyes them in the most lively Manner, and detests them with the utmost Abhorrence. Nor does he stifle his Resentment, as you often do, for want of the Power of Revenge. No, he could and can whenever he pleases create a thousand Hells for any one of you, the very Minute you presume to offend him. Instead of which, he has been pleased with ineffable Meekness and Benevolence not only to bear with all your Ingratitude, but even to have Compassion on you who have thus basely treated your Chief, your only great Benefactor. Ah! When was their ever known a Monarch who, having it in his Power to punish with the utmost Rigour of Justice such of his Vassals as had often attempted

to betray him, not only forbore punishing them, but even loaded them with fresh Proofs of his Favour. Yet thus has God acted with you. Ah, how many Treacheries and Infidelities has he not borne with, from you, and yet continued his Benevolence to you! Every Mortal Sin you have committed has been a horrible Conspiracy against the Honour and Dignity of your Divine Sovereign, and O how often has he put up with such Treasons from you, and not only forbore to inflict on your Rashness and Baseness the eternal Chastisements due to them, but even heap innumerable Favours. Ah, Christians, what return then can you make to God, for all this Mercy, less than that which he requires of you, of bearing with the lesser Injuries you receive from One-another, and returning all the Good you can practice, for all the Evil you can receive. Let your Neighbours load you with all the Abuse they can, 'tis still but a finit Offence and therefore can never amount to the Greatness of the Injury you offer to God, in every single Mortal Sin, which is an infinit Offence, because it is an Insult offer'd to an infinit Being, to whom you have infinit Obligations.

What say you, Christians? You are ready to be reconciled to your Enemies, if they would but make the first advances towards

your forgiving them? O my God! Had'st thou waited till we first were converted to thee, before thou had'st advanced towards us with thy converting Mercy, how should we ever have attain'd to Forgiveness? No, God sees the inflexibility of your Hearts in Sin, and how little disposed you are of yourselves to treat with him on a Reconciliation, and therefore, graciously sends you his Invitations to Repentance, as if he stood in need of your Friendship; whereas he was eternally happy before you were created and would be equally so if you should all perish. Can you then, O stubborn Mortals, refuse to melt into Mercy at the Sight of so much Generosity? Can you refuse to make the first advances towards a Reconciliation with such of your Equals by Nature, as have offended you, when your God can stoop to make the first advances towards a Reconciliation with you, who are his Creatures infinitely beneath him, and have infinitely offended him?

You have no other Means than these to shew your Gratitude to God, for such infinit Generosity, nor to pay the Debt it lays you under. And how immensely great is not his Goodness in putting it thus in your Power to Discharge so infinit a Debt? Alas tho' the Enmity of your Neighbours should level at all your Substance, your Peace, your Reputation,

putation, your Life, and all that is dear to you, it would still fall short of your Enmity to God, in one Mortal Sin. Every Mortal Sin of yours cost no less than the Death of his Divine Son. O how patient and forgiving would you not think an earthly Sovereign, who should not be tired with pardoning a treacherous Subject, who after being loaded with all the Favours he could heap upon him, had cruelly murder'd ten of his Children. And yet how much greater is not the Patience and Forgiveness which God has shewn to you, in forgiving you after having murder'd not ten but perhaps hundreds and hundreds of times, his Divine, his only, his dearly beloved Son, by the Mortal Sins you have committed against his Commandments, Every-one of which was in it's Nature a fresh Crucifixion of JESUS CHRIST, who died on a shameful painful Cross, for every Sin in particular which you have committed! This is a Patience a Forgiveness which could find room only in the Heart of a God infinitely in love with us. And how much greater does not his Affection to us appear in this than to the Angels. In them he would even put up with the first Offences, but condemn'd whole Millions of Legions of them to eternal Misery, for one single Insult, and yet not only patiently endures with thousands of Insults from

Every-one of us, but even continues his Benevolence to us, and courts us to renew a strict Friendship with him, by the most endearing Invitations. O my God what Return shall we make thee for all this immensity of Love?

What say'st thou gracious Lord? *Love your Enemies, do good to those who hate you, pray for those who persecute you.* Yes, my heavenly Lord I hear thee, but what is this to the infinit Obligations we owe to thee? They have offended us but finitly, and we have infinitely offended thee. What then can our Forgiveness to them be in Comparison of thine to us? Thou art the Infinite Being to whom we owe the utmost Charity we are capable of, and how alas can they supply thy Place? No matter, such is my heavenly gracious Condescension, says God, to substitute them to receive the Effects of your Charity. And therefore, *what you do to one of the least of mine you have done to me.* O what unparallel'd Goodness, Christians, does not God display in this All-gracious Condescension. Thus does he afford you the Means to discharge yourselves of this great Debt you owe to him. He has exerted all the infinity of his Wisdom, Power, and Goodness, to do you good in quality of his Friends. Nay e'er you could be so, while you were Strangers to him, buried in
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the dark Abyſs of Nothing, he carried his Affection to the drawing you from thence, raiſing you to the Power of being his Friends, and courted you to it by all the Benefactions which a GOD ſo merciful could load you with. O who but GOD would not have ſtopped his Hand after the Abufe of ſo many Favours? But he as if he had been inſenſible of all your Baſeneſs to him, or as if he had been pleaſed with being inſulted, has ſtill return'd all your Baſeneſs with freſh Proofs of unutterable Love, ſpared no Expence, not even the Death, the cruel ſhameful Death, of his Divine Beloved only begotten Son, to re-inſtate you in your right to that eternal Blifs, for which he made you and of which you proved yourſelves ſo undeſerving. And all this only to overcome your Vilenefs with his Bounty and make you happy againſt your Inclinations. And ſhall he not then ſucceed, Chriſtians, after all this Exceſs of Love? Shall it be ſaid that he who has loved you to ſuch a ſweet extreme ſhall ask no other return of you than that for his Sake *you love One-another*, to the utmoſt of your Power, *even as he has loved you*, and yet be refuſed? Shall he have done ſo much for you when Strangers to him, nay when odious to him, and you reſuſe a charitable Tenderneſs to Strangers in Diſtreſs, ſhall he have loved and treated

treated You as Friends, and you not treat your Neighbours as such, or love your Friends with a mere outside shew? Shall he have pardon'd you such infinit Offences, nay, added to his Pardon such ineffable Effects of Mercy, and you continue your Resentment to your Neighbours for every slight Offence. If Revenge appears so sweet to you, Beloved, forget not that you are Creatures, and ought to give the Preference to God. He has not yet revenged the Blood of his eternal Son: And till he does, your Vengeance must be out of time. What shall Worms like you take place of God? No, while he forgives, you must: And not in bare Expression but, like him, in fact. 'Tis easy to pretend Forgiveness: But *which is easier*, as my Text says, to say to your Neighbour, *your Sins are forgiven you*, as far as relates to me, or to shew you are in earnest by withdrawing the Effects of your Resentment, and re-instating him in your Favour by fresh Benefits? 'Twas thus your Saviour in this Gospel gave Proofs of his Forgiveness, and thus must you confirm your own. This is the only Means you have to make a grateful Return to God for all the Love he has shewn to You. This he expressly requires of you, that *you love One-another even as he has loved You*. And by this love alone he tells you, that *all Men shall*

shall know you are his Disciples. If You are not his Disciples in vain he has redeem'd you; and if You are, by loving One-another as he loved you, you will reap the Benefit of being such which is to live by him, for to this End alone did he come into the World, says St. John, that you might live by him, a Life of Grace on Earth, and a Life of eternal Glory in Heaven. Which, &c. In the Name, &c.



SERMON



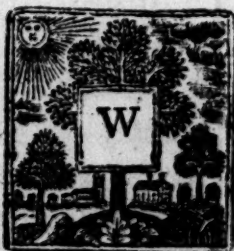
S E R M O N

On the Nineteenth SUNDAY after

P E N T E C O S T.

St. MATTHEW xxii. 14.

Many are call'd but Few are chosen.



WHEN the eternal King of Heaven, out of his superabundant Goodness to the Creatures of his own making, was graciously pleased to wed his Divine Son Jesus, by giving him the Holy Church for his immaculate Spouse; his Intention was that all Mankind might reap the Benefit, and partake in the Joy of those ineffable Nuptials. To the *Jews* however it was that he sent his first and special Invitations, they being then his distinguish'd Favorites. But alas! They were besotted enough to neglect the proffer'd Blessing, hurried away some by Interest

Interest some by Pleasure, All by the darling Objects of their different unruly Appetites. It was then, O Christians, that the Divine Majesty, loth to leave his Favours uncommunicated, sent out his Servants into the Streets, into the High-ways to gather you from among the different Nations, to partake of the Riches of his Goodness. But ah, how illy do you correspond to such an Excess of Bounty! How many of You remain as insensible to the Divine Favour as the *Jews*! How Few of you fall short of them in Neglect! What Numbers exceed them in Ingratitude! Where is the Christian, who does not make worldly Interest the Measure of his religious Practice? Where is the Catholic who compels Pleasure to give place to Duty? Have you not Everyone your Stage of Business, your Place of Pleasure, your Prospect of Applause, to divert you from listening to the Voice of God, who invites you to be his Guest? In a word. *How many are call'd, and how Few are chosen!* For your part, Christians, you are All of you call'd. But are you all of the Number chosen? You are All welcome Guest, you are All invited by God to the Banquet of his Glory. But have you All the nuptial Vest of his Grace? Alas would you could with any Truth say, yes. To what then, shall I impute your Neglect of

so material a Point, or what Arguments shall I use to convince you of the Greatness of your Oversight? To set you right, Christians, all I can say is, that you will have no One to blame but yourselves, if you are not elected into the State of Glory to which you are call'd. And this I shall endeavour to convince you of,

I. By pointing out the general Causes of Reprobation in Many of those who are call'd.

II. By shewing, that All being call'd to be chosen, Every-one has his Election in his own Reach: *And*

III. By considering the necessary Consequences flowing from these Truths, and the Reflections they ought to raise in us.

“ O thou dear Generous Lord, who
 “ has't prepared the Banquet of thy Glory
 “ for us, be not content to call us kindly
 “ to it; but mercifully send thy efficacious
 “ Grace which may sweetly draw us all
 “ to accept thy liberal Invitation, and cloath
 “ us with the Nuptial Garment of thy
 “ Love that we may be Elect as well as
 “ call'd.”

I. There are Few, very Few, who can plead involuntary Ignorance as any tolerable

ble Excuse, even to Men, for the Excesses they give into against the Laws of God and his Church. And None, no not One can alledge it to God, but Infants, and Idiots. All others have Knowledge enough given them, to lead them to eternal Felicity; and therefore is it that they are culpable in swerving from it: For as St. *James* says, *to him, who knoweth Good and doth it not, to him is the Sin.* Had the Divine Creator left Man in an absolute Ignorance of Good or Evil, and a total Stranger to the future Happiness resulting from the One, as well as to the subsequent Misery flowing from the Other, the Choice of Either would have been an indifferent Action, incapable in itself of Praise or Blame. But such is the infinit Goodness of the Almighty, that he *enlightens All Men coming into this World*, sufficiently to Work their Salvation. There is no One so Ignorant as not to know Good from Evil, and the inviting, or terrifying Consequence of his Good, or Bad Choice. Every Man knows the Certainty of Misery, and the Precariousness of Happiness in this Life. And without the Help of any higher Lights than those of Nature, All Nations, All Degrees of Men, are unanimous in the Belief (not to call it Conviction) of a future more solid certain Felicity. Nay however they may vary in their Ideas of that

Felicity, yet All agree that the Practice of every Virtue is the only Means to attain to it. And that yearning after Felicity which God has so strongly ingrafted in every human Breast, is sufficient to make Everyone earnestly desirous of Happiness beyond Death.

Why then do we see so Few, who pursue that Happiness in earnest? Why do so many take the Measures diametrically opposite to the avow'd Means by which alone that Felicity can be obtain'd? The Reason is obvious. Mankind are hurried away from their Happiness by the Misapplication of those Passions, which were given them to animate them in the right Pursuit of it. In short, Passion led on by Precipitancy has brought human Nature to such a Pass, that there is very little Difference to be made between Age and Infancy, if you except Years and Guilt. The greatest part of Men are but full grown Children, who act by Starts, and think by Appearances. The Difference between their Infancy, their Youth, and their Manhood is, that their Passions grow stronger, their Reason weaker, and their Guilt heavier, and more unpardonable, as the Consequence is more fatal. But in every Stage alike they are determin'd by the outsides of things, because too indolent to penetrate farther; and unaccustom'd to
carry

carry their Imagination beyond the Present, the Future affects them but little, if at all. A Young Child will prefer a Brass Counter before him, to the future Possession of a Golden Medal: And a Youth in his Minority will sometimes give up his Right to a plentiful Estate, for a trifling Sum to gratify a present Appetite with. Yet these are Rules which will admit of many Exceptions, as we know by Experience. But how few Exceptions are to be found of Men who will not give up the Treasures of God's Glory to pursue a trifling Lucre in View! For one whom we may except, how many Millions are there who knowingly and willingly give up the future solid Joys of Heaven in exchange for a trivial, empty, fleeting, present Pleasure, which must cost them without Comparison more Pains and Uneasiness to possess, than it required to renounce it.

Pleasure, Profit and Applause, are the three great Motives to which God has confined all our Pursuits: And these rightly applied are sufficient to guide all Men to Salvation. But how generally alas are they misapplied! If Pleasure be your Pursuit, Christians, who of you all need want a Motive to follow the Call of God to his Service; when promised a Share of such exquisite Delight, *as Eye bath not seen, Ear bath*
not

not heard, nor hath it enter'd into the Heart of Man? But alas this Pleasure, great as it is believed, great as it really is, you eye a far off, you look upon as future; and therefore Impatient of more speedy Enjoyment, you are deaf to God when he calls you to it. A present Lust, a sudden Revenge, and actual Luxury, have more prevalent Charms, and you give them the Preference. Why, O Lecher, do you persist in that criminal Enjoyment, which you are uncertain of possessing, when a more solid Fruition is proffer'd you for Eternity? Why, O implacable Wretch, do you pursue Resentment, when invited back to a more Noble Triumph, by the Avenger of all Wrongs? Why, O Glutton, will you pamper your depraved Appetite, in Defiance of the Laws of God and his Church, when your Temperance would be so substantially requited at the Banquet of his eternal Love. Ah! The Cause is but too plain, the present Pleasure stands between you and Eternity. God calls you to the Pleasures he created you for: But Every-one of you has form'd a Pleasure of his own to himself, and God may call to Eternity, you will never listen to him.

Why does that Miser place his Happiness in Usury? Why does this other Tradesmen delight in unjust Gain, impose on his Dealers, and defraud his Creditors, contrary

to the known Laws of GOD, and the Dictates of his own Conscience; and why do you, O heartless Christians, resist the known Truth, impugn it, delay embracing it, or blush to defend it, where your worldly Interest is at Stake? Is it that you are insensible of the infinit Treasures hoarded up for such as renounce the World and it's Interests, to answer the Call of Christ? Or is it that you are not desirous of them? No, neither is true. You both know the Rewards, and yearn after them. But present Interest presents itself to your elevated View, in the most amiable Light; you have not the Patience to wait for the future. And GOD may call on, you are still deaf to his Voice.

How few Ambitious Men would there be; How small would be the Number of Those, who at the Expence of Virtue, of Peace, and of Life itself, are in perpetual Pursuit, of Power, Dignity, and Splendor; how very small, I say, would be their Number, but for the empty Applause and Homages of a flattering World! But are there not greater Degrees of Applause promised by GOD to such as renounce All these for Christ's Sake, and to answer his Call to Glory? Yes, ah yes! They who renounce the Applause of Men will be applauded by GOD himself in the Presence of the whole

whole World. They who have Courage enough to assert Christ before Men, without Fear of their Ridicule or Disapprobation, will one Day be commended by him in the Presence of Men, Angels, and God himself. That Man who dares be Chaste amidst the Sneers of a lewd Company, dares be honest amidst the Scoffs of Knaves, and Sober in spite of the Mockery of Drunkards, shall instead of the false Applause he had the Heart to despise, receive the solid Praise of his just God, in the Face of the Universe. Is not the Exchange then worth waiting? Yes; but ah, Christians, such is your Impatience and Precipitance, that they suffer you not to weigh the future with the Present. Applause is what you covet; the Present is before you and the Future you will not cast an Eye towards; therefore are you so grossly cheated out of your eternal Felicity. Therefore, in a word, is it that None of you have Ears when God invites you to his Glory; Because one has tuned his Senses to the immediate Voice of Pleasure, another to the Invitation of actual Interest, and a Third to the Magic Sound of present Flattery. To express it in the Words of the Gospel, one has his Farm or rural Entertainments to attend to, another his Traffic, and Worldly Commerce, another his Wife, or something worse.

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There are indeed a Kind of Christians, who ought to be excepted from those we have been talking of. To speak Truth, the Pleasure, Profit, or Applause of the World, have very little share in their Motives of acting. But then they are full as indifferent to those of Heaven. It is not that they do not desire, and desire earnestly to be happy with God and his Angels: But then their Desires however earnest are ineffectual. They know that *the Kingdom of Heaven suffers Violence*, and therefore habituated to Indolence, they chuse rather to risk a perpetual Exclusion from it, than to be at the Pains of violenting themselves in any thing. And tho' the nuptial Vest of God's Grace be sufficient to qualify them to partake of the Banquet of his Glory, they will rather hazard a shameful Repulse, than be at the Pains of acquiring and preserving it. In short, they slothfully suffer themselves to sink into the Number of the Reproved rather than be at the trouble, as they think it, of stretching forth their Hand to lay hold of the Election to Bliss, which courts their Acceptance. This naturally leads me to shew you,

Secondly, That All Mankind being call'd by God, with the Intent that they might be chosen to his Glory, Every-

one has his own Election within his own Reach.

That God created All Mankind to enjoy eternal Felicity with him, is too universally acknowledged, to stand in need at present of any Support. To whom then can it be owing, that they are not all as happy as he design'd them to be? It must be absurd to imagin that God would act any thing destructive of his own Divine Purpose. And if he created them to be happy, he must give them the Means to be so: Since it is beneath his infinit Wisdom to desire them to be, what they had not the Power of being. If then Man was provided with all the Means requisite to attain to eternal Felicity, is it not his own Fault that. He neglects those Means, and in so doing forfeits the Bliss he was design'd for? It is true indeed, that Man was no sooner invested with the Right to eternal Glory, than he forfeited that Glory, and the very Means to recover his original Right. And yet God was so far from taking Advantage of the Fall of Man, to exclude the whole Race from the Bliss he had given them a Right to, in Virtue of his Promise; that he sent his only begotten Son to re-instate them in their Abilities and restore them, at the immense Price of his precious Blood, to the Means

Means of Salvation which they had lost. None were excepted from this Act of Grace: It is universal and takes in All who will Benefit by it. *Come to me*, says Christ, *all You who Labour and are heavy Laden I will refresh You.* They who have Grace are invited to receive the Means to preserve and augment it; they who have None, that is they who are oppress'd with Sin, and labour under the load of Guilt, are invited to disburden themselves at Christ's Feet, and to receive the Refreshment of his Grace. All, All are invited. The Worthy and the Unworthy alike are call'd: Or rather None are Unworthy with him of being chosen, but such as are unwilling to be so.

Come to me All, says Christ: All then are invited. It is true he compels None, that they who accept his Invitation may have the Merit of doing it. God created Man a free Agent, and left in his Power the Choice of Happiness or Misery, that chusing the Bliss design'd for him he might possess it in the most perfect Manner his being was capable of, by possessing it in his own Right, in Virtue of God's unalterable Promise. It would have been then inconsistent with his ineffable Goodness to divest him of that which he created him for, by violenting his Free-will. And ah, my God! Who would think that Man could be so much

his own Enemy, to stand in need of any Force to be made eternally happy!

GOD, it is plain, O Mortals, is better acquainted with you, than you with yourselves, and therefore tho' he does not force your Will, he afforded you Grace, Lights, and Means, sufficient to bias that Free-will to the Choice of your own Happiness. If then you slight that Grace, if you neglect those Lights, if you abuse those Means, shall GOD be reputed unjust for not forcing you. *What could I do to my Vine, says GOD, and have not done it?*

It will perhaps be objected, that a Man who is in a State of Mortal Sin, cannot be released from it but by GOD's Grace. True: Yet how came he to fall into that State but by abusing the Grace, and neglecting the Lights first given him. GOD *illuminates all Men coming into this World*, with sufficient Light for their present Exigence, if they make a right use of that Light, he augments it and adds Light, to Light, in proportion to their Improvement of it, till they reach to that perfect Grace requisite to eternal Salvation. And such as never reach to that Grace are they, who have abused the first Lights given them, and thereby forfeited any farther Ones. And yet No One is so void of Grace but he may have it for asking: And surely 'tis a very trivial Favour which

which is not worth a Petition. *Ask and ye shall have, says Christ, seek and ye shall find, knock and it shall be open'd to You.* You need then but ask and have. Does not GOD in the solemnest Manner protest *that he will not the Death of a Sinner.* No. He desires that *you should be converted and be saved.* Is not your Life then left at your own Option? *What does GOD require of you,* says the Prophet, *but that you love him?* Is this so arduous a Task? You may say you cannot Fast, you cannot give Alms, you cannot Kneel long: It may be true for ought I can gainsay. But can you, O Christian, with any Truth say: I cannot love what is infinitely lovely? And yet this is all you are ask'd. This is that perfect Charity, that Grace, that nuptial Garment, which entitles you to sit at the Banquet of GOD's Glory. Is it not plain then to a Demonstration, O Beloved Christians, that your Election is within your own Reach? Let us therefore in passing cast an Eye on the important Consequences to be drawn from these Truths, which will make the third Consideration proposed in this Discourse, and introduce my Conclusion.

III. From what has been said we must necessarily infer, that the Work of our Salvation absolutely depends upon our Con-
currence

currence with the Divine Grace. And since that Grace is given to All who ask it, none can plead a legitimate Excuse for the want of it. If therefore we should be damn'd, Christians, we shall have this melancholly Circumstance to aggravate our Misery, that our Sufferings will be unpitied. It is some Alleviation to a Wretch in the midst of the greatest of Evils, when he is conscious of not having drawn them upon himself. But the Wretched Objects of God's Wrath will have no room for this solitary Comfort. No, their Sufferings will be sharpen'd by the Sting of their Conscience, which will perpetually remind them that they themselves were the voluntary Authors of their own irreparable Misery. And what will swell the Sum of their Despair will be the hateful, yet ever present Comparison of the infinit Substantial Bliss they have lost, with the Empty Trifles they exchanged it for. What Rage must not possess them, when they eye with one Thought the Solid Felicity of the Blessed and the uncertain fleeting empty Joys for which they consented to renounce it! How can they without Despair compare the Treasures of Heaven with the false Lucre they accepted in exchange for them? And can they be Witnesses to the Praises which God will give to his Servants, for having preferr'd his Love to all human
Respects,

Respects, and remain in a State of Tranquillity? No. The Invitation of Christ to his Elect: *Come Ye Blessed of my Father*, will throw them into an Agony of Envy and Despair, which can scarce be augmented by the horrid Sentence pronounced against themselves: *Go ye Cursed into everlasting Fire*. How besotted then is every Mortal who will run so dreadful a Risk, when in his Power to avoid it. How strangely infatuated must he be to renounce thus an Eternity of Happiness, and embrace an Eternity of Wretchedness, for the Sake of any Pleasure, Profit, or Applause, this World can afford him! Especially when we consider that the highest Happiness we can propose to ourselves in this Life, never answers the Ideas we conceive of it; but is ever uncertain in it's Pursuit, momentary in it's Duration, empty in it's Possession, and almost ever drown'd in the Anxieties, Fatigues, and perplexing Circumstances which surround it. And yet how general a Folly is this among Men; I may say among Christians; and what is more melancholy, but not less true, it is so even among Catholics. What wonder then that of the *Many* who are call'd, *so Few* are chosen.

I cannot help taking Notice here of something very remarkable in the Conclusion of this

this Day's Gospel. It appears from the very Account of the Sacred Text that of all the Guest, who were present at the Royal Banquet, there was but one, only one excluded from it, for want of a Nuptial Garment. Where then was the Room for this extraordinary this suprising Reflection: *Many are call'd but Few are chosen?* Ah 'tis GOD, it is Christ who speaks, to whom one single Soul is worth a Thousand Worlds. Such is the Infinity of GOD's Goodness to Man, that he looks upon the Millions of his Elect as small gain in Comparison with the loss of one Soul.

What value then, O Christian, ought not you to set upon that Soul. GOD has Millions in his Possession and can to Eternity create as many more as he pleases: You have but one Soul to lose or save, and that lost you cannot redeem nor compensate with another. He can really suffer no Loss, were all the Souls he created to be destroy'd; You if you lose your own Soul, lose your All, and must be eternally sensible of it. Learn then from the high Value which GOD's disinterest Bounty sets upon you, to prize yourselves henceforth more than you hitherto have done. Place nothing in Competition with your Salvation. *What will it avail a Man to gain the Whole World and suffer the Loss of his own Soul, which ten thousand*

thousand Worlds cannot ransom. Work your Salvation in fear and trembling, and since *Many are call'd and Few are chosen*, make it the Business of your Life to procure that Nuptial Garment of Grace and Charity, which you have in your Reach, that You may be of the Happy Few elected to that Substantial Banquet of Glory and Felicity, which satiates but never gluts, which Eye hath not seen, Ear hath not heard, nor Tongue utter'd, nor hath it enter'd into the Heart of Man to conceive; and which Nothing can give a perfect Idea of but that peaceful eternal Possession, which I heartily wish you, and beg God in his infinit Mercy to grant you: *In the Name, &c.*





S E R M O N

On the Twentieth SUNDAY after

P E N T E C O S T.

St. J O H N iv. 46, &c.

A certain Lord, whose Son was Sick at Capharnaum, coming to Christ in Cana of Galilee, sayth to him: Lord come down before that my Son die. JESUS therefore sayth to him: Go thy Son liveth. Accordingly this Lord going back to Capharnaum and finding that the Fever left his Son in the same Hour in which JESUS say'd to him, Thy Son liveth, himself believed and his whole House.



MY GOD, that my Voice was but at present audible as the rattling Peals of the jarring Clouds, to ring like Thunder in the Ears of the drowsy People of this Nation,

Nation, and force them to tremble for their Safety! O that my Words were but subtle as Lightning to penetrate to the very Souls of These at least who hear me; that they might at length be prevail'd upon for once, to look round them! And when, O Christians, was there need of putting you upon your Guard, if there be not now; when Death is rapping at every Door, when the Numbers of Families in this Kingdom may almost be number'd by the Burials they have furnish'd, and when, for little the present reigning Pestilence augments, there will be reason to expect every Street in this populous City to be once more cover'd with Grass, for want of Feet to tread it down? But ah, what hopes can I entertain that a feeble Voice like mine, that Accents void of every Grace, strip'd of every Eloquence shall affect you, when the eloquent pathetic Sound of a passing Bell, tolling almost incessantly in every Steeple, has neither the force to awake you from Sleep, nor to make you reflect when broad-awake. Tell me, dear Auditors! What Street can you traverse without hearing of Somebody just dead or dying: And yet which of you reflects how soon you may become the Subject of a like Conversation? What Corner can you turn without encountering a Funeral: And yet which of you all is startled by a thought

on your own? What Family can you visit scarce, without missing a Friend or Acquaintance: Still which of you Reflects that You may be the next Person miss'd when your Visit should be return'd? So very familiar are you grown with Death, and so very little are you prepared for his Approaches! You can follow, nay, elbow him to the very Graves of Others, without once preparing to face him when he shall beckon you to your own. O what a strange inconsideracy, to be so little alarm'd amidst so much Danger; to use so little Precaution in such a time of Sicknes! However, Mistake me not, Christians, I do not doubt but you are cautious enough for your bodily Health. I don't question your recurring to your Physicians for Antidotes. But ah, which of you has yet seriously had recourse to that Sovereign Being, without whose Direction your Physician will prove your most fatal Disease?

Three Things I observe, in the Conduct of the Nobleman in our Gospel: His Behaviour before the Approaches of Sicknes, his Deportment in time of Sicknes, and his Manner of acting after it. In the two first, O Christians, how many of you are like him! But alas how Few resemble him in the last! Till Sicknes paid a Visit to his Family, he pay'd no Visit to Christ: No;
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it was the Sickness of his Son which put him in mind of having recourse to God. *A certain Lord*, says our Gospel, *whose Son was Sick at Capharnaum came to Christ*. Ah dearest Auditors! Such is the Conduct in general of you all. While your Health is good, while your Spirits are free. No God, no Heaven, can find Entrance into your Thoughts. Your Pleasures, your Interests, your worldly Attachments take up too much room in your Breasts to afford God a place there. He must lay his Hand heavy upon you, before you will vouchsafe to think seriously on him; and if he is absolutely bent on fixing his Abode in you; he must force his way to your Hearts by a Fever, an Inflammation, or some other Disorder. Then, then it is, if ever that you think of returning to him. But ah, how loth are you not oftentimes to do it even then! How froward was our Nobleman in recurring to Christ. Till Death drew the Curtain and shook Hands with his Child, this Sovereign Remedy was neglected. Then, and not till then, it was that he vouchsafed to apply to superior help. *Lord come down, before that my Son die*. O Christians, how like are you all to this dilatory Nobleman? How often, and yet to how little Purpose do we exhort you, beseech you, conjure you, to send for us Priests to reconcile you
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to God, in the Commencement of your Illness. But No: Till Death has too much terrified You out of Tranquillity, for us to be of any great Service to you, our Visits are rather importune than pleasing. O strange Neglect! Which, Miracles aside, must render all after Diligence abortive. Here however was a Miracle, Dilatory as our Nobleman had been, he obtain'd from Christ not only the Eternal, but the Temporal Cure of his indisposed Son. And happily for him, he return'd the Divine Favour with a grateful Adherence to Christ. *And himself believed and his whole House.* O that as much could be said of Every-one of You! Look back, O Christians, on the dangerous Sickneses with which God has visited you in one time or other of Life, and yet mercifully by some Miracle, not less a Miracle for being hidden to you, restored you from the Arms of Death. And then reflect, how have you fulfill'd the good Purposes you made when Sick? What Thanks did you return him, when recover'd. And with what Gratitude have you behaved to him ever since? You can then make an ill use of Health, and yet cannot make a good of present or past Sicknes. O dreadful Perversity! Is there no bringing you off from it, Christians? Yes, by the Grace of God, I hope to do it with some of you at least
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In this Discourse by convincing you of two things,

I. How you ought to behave as Christians, before Sickness, in it, and after it: *And*

II. Of what infinit Importance it is for you to behave rightly in all these Circumstances.

“ O my God, let not one Syllable of this Discourse be lost, but give my Hearers Grace to mind it, and may they mind it, not to their Condemnation, but to a fruitful Practice. ”

I. It is beneath the Dignity of the Divine Majesty, to create an Intelligent Being like ours, for the eternal Possession of himself, and yet to keep it from that Possession during a Number of Years in this Mortal State, barely for the Sake of letting it breathe a while in a State of Vicissitude, of Health, and Sickness, and bustle for a Support. No, God must certainly have some nobler end in placing us in this Mortal State, than just that we might bustle to live, and live only to die at last. The great Motive of our Creation you know, Christians, was that we might enjoy eternal Felicity, and enjoy it as our own, by making it, through God's free Grace and Promises, our personal Acquisition.

quisition. It was highly consistent therefore, with his infinit Wisdom for God to place us, after the Fall, in this variable State of Mortal Life, that by making a right use of the Vicissitudes of weaken'd Nature, we might repair our Loss, and acquire the Virtues requisite to qualify us for the Bliss design'd us. For as there are two Kinds of Virtue the one passive as it were and of a feebler Nature, such as *Meekness*, *Patience*, *Resignation*, and the like; the Other active, robust, and vigilant, as *Faith*, *Hope*, *Fortitude*, and many more, but above all that true excelling *Charity*, which extends to all the Works of Mercy and of Justice; Man could not well acquire them both without being Subject to the various States of Health, and Sicknes, Ease, and Pain.

Sickness, consider'd in a natural Light only is a natural Evil, inasmuch as it is opposit to Health, and Ease, which the Appetite considers and covets as natural Goods; but if it be eyed in a moral Light as affording us the Opportunity of acquiring the Habits of *Patience*, *Resignation*, and the like, it often will prove to be, and always might be, if we applied it rightly, a moral Good. *Health* on the contrary is in itself a natural Good; but considering it morally according to the too frequent ill use it is made of, it is in general, through our own Perversity,

Perverſity, a moral Evil. And yet is it in itſelf and in the Intention of the Divine Donor, a moral Good as well as a natural One; becauſe it affords us the Opportunity of practiſing thoſe Virtues, which are not ſo eaſily put in Execution in time of Infirmitie. *Patience, Meekneſs, Reſignation*, and other Paſſive Virtues, as they require not an extraordinary Share of Spirits, may be practiſed without much Difficulty in a very infirm State. Nay, as their Objects are natural Evils, that State ſeems the moſt proper for acquiring the Habit of theſe Virtues. But the robuſter Virtues being in their very Nature of an active Diſpoſition, require a conſiderable Strength of Mind and Vigour of Heart, as well as a large Portion of Spirits in a Man to acquire the Habits of them, and therefore Health muſt be the State, in which he is to labour for the Acquiſition of thoſe Habits. Tho' then, as Habits create Eaſe, a Man who has acquired the Habits of the robuſter Virtues may and will without Difficulty practice them even in Sickneſs, Sickneſs is not the State for acquiring them, but Health. The great End therefore for which God gives you Health, Chriſtians, is that you may employ it in arming yourſelves with the Habits of thoſe Virtues, which are not to be obtain'd in a State of Infirmitie. And conſequently as

you can never be certain how soon Infirmity may overtake you, you cannot answer the Divine Intentions, without making use of every Hour of Health, in the Study of those Virtues, lest you should find the Want of them, when too late to supply that Want.

Thus far then it appears, that Health in itself is not a natural, but a moral Good, and a considerable one too, if we please to make it such: Consequently desirable. Eating and Drinking then, with all those innocent Exercises and Diversions which are necessary to preserve Health, are not only lawful, but commendable, provided the Christian Use of that Health be the Chief Motive of using them. But O how horrible an Inversion is it not for a rational Creature, much more a Christian, to hug Health merely for the Sake of eating, and drinking, and idle Occupations, and Sollicitude! This is a Sentiment more becoming Brutes than rational Creatures, and capable only of perverting Health into a real Evil, not only moral but natural, inasmuch as it not only depraves the Appetite, but hebetates and stupifies the very Understanding.

The only way then, Christians, to make Health a Good, as God intends to you, is to make the Support and Preservation of it, only the Means, and to consider the virtuous Use of that Health as the only End for which
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God gives it you. In Health your Apprehension is quick, your Judgment solid, your Memory ready, your Spirits flow freely, and your Limbs are in readiness to move at your beckon. When therefore can you so properly apply yourselves to the Study of the Divine Laws as in such a freedom of Thought, of Will, and of Action. How diligently then ought you not to employ every Moment in this State, to raise your Minds to God with a lively Faith in his sacred Mysteries, to fix your Hearts on him with unshaken Confidence in his never failing Goodness, and to live such unblemish'd Lives as may render your Confidence not presumptuous, but filial. How solicitous ought you not to be to arm yourselves with the Habit of Fortitude, necessary to repel Vice, and the Difficulties in surmounting it; necessary to acquire the other Virtues and necessary to look down upon the fallacious Goods of the Earth with Contempt, as well as to look up with aspiring Joy to Heaven, under the Pressures of future Sicknes, and present Disappointments! In a word, how assiduous should you not be in employing all your Stock of Mental Vigour, all your freedom of Will, and flow of Strength and Spirits, in Acts of Love and Gratitude and Tenderness for the God who gives them to you, and in proving that Love to him by

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your Love for your Neighbour. While you are in Health then, then is the time to move your Limbs to Prisons, to Sick-beds, and to the Hovels of the Poor. Then is your time to labour industriously, to support and edify your own Family, to feed the Hungry, to cloath the Naked, and right the injured or distressed. While your Mind is clear you may inform yourselves and instruct others, you may stretch your Hands to lend your Money here, and exert your Tongues to counsel or admonish there. You may Pray, and Fast, and give Alms, and Example. You may seek God, and draw others to seek him. But ah, my Friend, if this be neglected in Health; how shall we be able to do it during Sicknes! All this requires Health, and Vigour, and Spirits, and Activity, which fly before the Face of Infirmary. In Sicknes you may indeed be patient and resign'd; but ah, what Hopes are there that you will be so, when unprovided with that Fortitude, which is necessary to buoy up your Patience and Resignation? How shall you be able to soar to God with Faith and Confidence in him, Virtues you are unacquainted with, when your Minds are borne down by an overwhelming Attention to Pains and sickly Qualms? How shall you lift your Hearts to him when weigh'd down by a load of bodily Anguish? What

What Spirits can you promise yourselves to resist the Temptations of a Sick-bed, when you have none to check the Languor of your Distemper? Can you attend to examine your Accounts and right the Injured, when Pains, and Achs, and Swoons, and Faintings, almost rob you of yourselves? Or can you practice Mercy to your Neighbours, or Love to God, when reduced to need the Mercy of Every-one and almost to forfeit that of God, by a despairing Hatred of yourselves? No. No Christians! Health is the time to acquire all those Virtues, which in Sickness you may want and wish to practice; but will ever wish in vain if you are not already provided with the Habits of them. Of such infinit Importance is it then to live well during Health. Be wise therefore, Christians; and as you know not how soon you, or yours may be in the Condition of the Sick Son, of the Nobleman, in this Gospel, wait not like him till Sickness overtakes you, before you recur to God. No, recur to him from this Instant, and secure his Protection against you are Sick, by making a grateful Use of the Health he now gives you to acquire those holy Habits, which you will find of the greatest Stead to you.

II. But ah! My God, how many Christians, not content to imitate this Lord in
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the abuse of Health, even copy after his Delay in time of Sickneſs! How many have I, how many have others of God's Miniſters conjured to recur to God in the firſt Stage of Sickneſs. And can we ſcarce find one of you diſpoſed to regard us. Look ye, Beloved, the Moment to ſpeak in the largeſt Senſe, the Moment you find it neceſſary to ſend for Phyſician or Apothecary, you ought to think it of Importance to ſend for your Director. If there was no other Good in it than this, it cannot but turn to Account. As it is certain, that every Weight upon the Spirits muſt backen a Cure and forward the Diſtemper, it muſt be abſolutely adviſeable to rid the Spirits as much as poſſible of every weight which oppreſſes them. And your Caſe muſt be deſperate indeed, if the Sins and Neglects you have been Guilty of, are no Weight upon your Spirits when Sickneſs overtakes you. Or if they are a weight, the removing that weight cannot but leſſen your load, alleviate your Diſorder and open a freer Paſſage to Medicinal Remedies. Is it not a ſtrange Infatuation then, to be ſo averſe to a Practice ſo beneficial to the Body, when no better a Reaſon can be given for rejecting it, than that it is ſalutary to the Soul? O Rational Creatures where is your Thoughts, whither is Reaſon fled? Will your being under the
immediate

immediate Protection of God, by having reconciled yourselves to him, encrease your Distemper, or render your Medicines less efficacious? Why then, all this Reluctance. But alas, what Hopes can I entertain, that my Remonstrances will have any Effect upon you, who consider the need of them at a Distance; when they have so often proved abortive even on the brink of Danger. How many, yes, how many have I visited uncall'd for, when I have hear'd of their Illness, from a Nurse, or a Doctor, and exhorted to prepare against Danger. And how seldom have I succeeded till too late, to be certain of being truly useful. I cannot go about it now: I hope I shall be better anon, is the too frequent Answer. O wretched Folly, if you find it so difficult to attend to the most important Concern of Life, when but half disorder'd; what Reason can you have to think, you can better attend to it when wholly oppress'd. Who knows how soon this Fever may fly up to your Head; how soon your Senses may fly out of your Reach, how soon this Wound may turn to a Gangrene, this Sickness to a Death? To-day you send for the Doctor, and To-morrow you send for the Priest. Are you sure he will be in the Way; are you sure if he is, that you will be in a Condition to Benefit by his Visit? To-morrow. *Fool this Night,*

Night, perhaps this very Night, *thy Soul shall be demanded of thee*, says the Holy Ghost. O Christian Souls, then be serious and think well on it. Take not Example from this heedless Lord, who, but for a Miracle had hazarded the Life of his Son, perhaps the Soul of his Son, by deferring to recur to the Divine Physician, till he was at the Point of Death. No, do you begin the Cure of your Bodies by that of your Souls; send for his Ministers, that by a Christian Reconciliation with God and his Church, you may secure yourselves the Divine Protection and render your Disease a Moral Good; and to do this reflect, if a Sick-bed Repentance is so precarious as it really is, how much more dubious must not a Death-sweat Repentance be.

O Christians, if you sanctify the Beginnings of a Sickness, of what Service will you not make that Divine Visit to You. For a Visit of God it is: Yes and a gracious one, perhaps never more necessary than at this present time, when Vice is as rife as Infirmities. And therefore may I apply to the present Contagion those Words of the Prophet, *there is no Evil in the City which the Lord hath not done*. 'Tis even so: There is no Evil haunts your Bodies this Day but for the Cure of your Souls. God would not be Omnipotent as St. *Augustin* remarks,

remarks, if he could not draw Good from Evil. And O what important Good does he not draw from the Evil of Sickness! This Woman, that Man, perhaps, led away by Example was on the brink of Iniquity, when God brought them back by a sudden Disease. This Young Woman, perhaps, had been utterly damn'd by the Pride of her Beauty: But God to beautify her Soul with the Ruins of a Face sent her a Small-Pox. And O Merchants and Tradesmen, such of you as are yet unresolved to restore what you have gotten by Fraud, if you resolve not speedily, God may, and I hope will if it is needful, Visit you with a raging Fever and bring you into Justice. Yes, I will, says God. *I will strike, and will heal.* O how serviceable then, is Sickness to the Soul! *Thy Visit,* says experienced JOB, *hath preserved my Soul.* And so it will yours Christians. You will find this natural Evil a real Moral Good, if you use it but rightly.

Sickness is the School, where every Virtue is practised if we take Care to secure the Habits in time, by setting out with sanctifying Grace. Then it is we pray with Fervour; then it is we make Acts of Faith, and Hope; then it is we are call'd upon for Patience and Resignation; then it is that our Hearts are open to Acts of Humility, Justice and Charity; and the weaker our

Bodies are in the Execution, the stronger are our Souls in the Intention, and Wishes. Then is it in a word, that we become Saints, if ever, according to that of St. PAUL, *When I become weak then I am powerful, for Virtue is perfected in Infirmary*, that is if we take care to sanctify the Beginnings. Learn then, O Christians, to reap these Advantages from Sickness against you come to stand in need of them. Be not like the heedless Lord in our Gospel, presumptuous to the last. Miracles are not to be depended on. You see the Dangers of Delay: You see the Benefit of recurring to God seriously, and you see them both in him. By too great a Delay he made a Miracle necessary to relieve him: And yet at last by recurring to God with Fervour he obtain'd that Miracle. Imitate then his Fervour and Faith; but copy not his Delay. If you depend on a like Miracle, your Presumption will be Folly, and God will mock at that Folly, *and laugh at your latter End.*

III. But ah! Christians, if you may not copy his Neglect, You may learn from him to be grateful. He when his Son was restored acknowledged the Divine Favour, *and believed himself and his whole House*, and believed with a Faith animated with Goodworks, otherwise his Belief had not been worthy

worthy of the Evangelist's Notice. But ah! Christians, how few of you when restored from a severe Illness, can have the Thought of giving Thanks to GOD, and approaching at your first Exit to the Holy Sacraments to acknowledge the Divine Mercy! How few of you remember the good Purposes you made, when upon the verge of Death as you Thought! And O how many return to their Vomit again! How did you wish, how did you pray for a Reprieve from Death! What Protestations did you not then make of desiring to live your Lives over again, only to live to GOD! And how seriously did you not then Vow, that if GOD would restore you to Life, you would devote that Life wholly to him, and to the Acquisition of those Virtues you found yourselves in want of! This you cannot deny to GOD nor Man. GOD was present, nay, I have been present with some of You. And O how many of these Scenes have I not seen! What Agonies, what Terrors, what Convulsions of Anxiety, did not then appear in you for fear your Prayers and Protestations should not prevail. How did you Curse your past Neglect, bless your present Purposes, and bless the Sickness which occasion'd them. How did you not Hope, and Fear, and Wish, and almost Despair, and Hope again! Perhaps, there

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may be Some here who could Witness the Truths I have now utter'd. And O that they might but stand here a while in my Stead! How much more feelingly would they not describe the Terrors they then were in, than I can do! How livelily would they not paint them, while they are yet fresh in their Memories. And O Heaven, grant they may never forget them. For O what Miseries have they not to fear, who after so much Experience of the Danger of living ill should relapse again into Vice! Have a Care then, Christians, how you act. If you should forfeit your Sick-bed Vows now you are restored to Health, your Baseness will be doubly heinous. Your Re-establishment, design'd by God a Mercy, will become a Curse. And future Sickness can afford you little Hopes. If you deceive God now, yourselves will fall the Dupes of your Deceit. Live then for the future as you wish'd you had lived, while you were Sick. And that you never may relapse into those Sins, which tortured you so much in Sickness, never forget the Purposes you made, the Fears and Pangs you felt, and the Petitions you then offer'd.

In short, dearest Fellow-Christians, as you cannot but be now convinced of the Dangers of perverting Health, trifling with Sickness, and abusing Recovery: You who
enjoy,

enjoy, undisturb, a Stock of good Health, employ it to Advantage in the Study of those Virtues, which will never fail when Health shall desert. You who hereafter may be Sick, dally not with Salvation by putting off your Repentance and Recourse to God till the last. Put not too much Confidence in your Physician, in his Medicines, in Your Youth or Constitution, and too little in God, and his Sacraments and Means. And you who have been Sick but are happily recover'd; forget not that there is a God to be thank'd; an Acknowledgment to be made; that there are Sins to be attoned for, a Hell to be avoided, a Purgatory to be fear'd, a Heaven to be hoped for, Virtues to be acquired, Vicious Habits to be conquer'd, Passions to be controul'd, Vows to be kept, Grace to be augmented, and a Soul to be saved. You have sin'd and have repented. *Go then and henceforth Sin no more, lest something worse befall you.* And that God may give you Grace so to do. I intreat; *In the Name, &c.*



SERMON



S E R M O N

On the Twenty-first SUNDAY after

P E N T E C O S T.

St. MATTHEW xviii. 23.

The Kingdom of Heaven is liken'd to a certain King, that would account with his Servants.



NOTHING can be more natural, easy, or familiar than the plain, tho' figurative Instruction, which Christ gives us in the Gospel of this Day. What can be more within the Reach of the meanest Capacity, than the Comparison of a King and his Servants? ---- A King so just that he Weighs the Worth of the meanest of his Vassals; and yet so condescending that he stoops to a Personal Examination

nation of them, to prevent their suffering unjustly thro' Partiality, Prejudice, or Misrepresentation: A Sovereign so rigorous as to threaten with absolute Slavery an Insolvent and his Family; yet a Sovereign so generous as graciously to remit the greatest of Debts and Offences upon a simple Promise of future Satisfaction: In a word, a Monarch so merciful as to remit the grossest Infidelities committed against himself; and yet so rigorously equitable as to load a Criminal whom he has just pardon'd with all the Weight of re-assumed Wrath, merely to retaliate the Cruelty he practis'd against his Fellow-Servant. If this Parable be not familiar, I know not what is. Apply it then, Christian, and know that, however wide Inconsideration may make it seem from any thing which concerns you, it is really applicable to None more than to Yourself.

The King whom Christ speaks of in this Passage is. His Divine Person itself, That Almighty Judge, who shall one Day call all his Servants to a strict Accompt of all their Thoughts, Words, and Actions; and You, You, O Christian, are the Unthrifty Servant who are, and will then be found an Insolvent Debtor to him. Happy for You in the Day of Reckoning if you should owe him no greater a Debt than ten thousand Talents

Talents unapplied, ten thousand Inspirations neglected, happy only if you should then have room to plead for Mercy. But ah! Christian, what Reason have you to hope for Mercy from your injured, exasperated Sovereign, while you are inflexibly severe to your Fellow Servant? Persist then no longer in deceiving yourself, unless you become more merciful to your Fellow-Creatures, unless you are less prompt to revenge more ready to forgive what better have you to trust to, than the final Sentence of the reprobate Servant of this Gospel? He for his Want of brotherly Charity was cast into utter Darkness. And if you are not warn'd by his Punishment to keep free from his Offence hear what will be your Doom also. *So also shall my heavenly Father do to You, if you forgive not Every-one his Brother from your Hearts.* Let us then examin,

I. What this Forgiveness consists in: *And*

II. How necessary it is to Salvation and on what Accounts.

And thence You will be able to conclude how little you consult Reason or Interest in the Grudges you retain to your offending Neighbours.

“ O thou dear Lord, who camest from
 “ Heaven to suffer on purpose to forgive,
 “ that thy forgiving us our infinit Offences
 “ might

" might spirit us, from Principles of Grati-
 " tude, to pardon for thy Sake the trivial
 " Transgressions of our Fellow-Servants,
 " O give us Light, and Grace, to know,
 " and practice, this important Duty, that
 " pardoning from our Hearts all them who
 " trespass against us, we may not ask our
 " own Damnation, but ask and receive thy
 " Grace in saying after thee. "

I. *So also shall my heavenly Father do to You,* says Christ, *if you forgive not Every-
 one his Brother from your Hearts.* From
 these Words it plainly appears, that the
 Forgiveness we owe to an offending Neigh-
 bour cannot be merely that Sort of For-
 bearance, which is rather an Effect of in-
 solent Scorn than of relenting Mercy. To
 stifle Resentment because we think a Person
 beneath our Revenge, is an Excess of Ar-
 rogance. Distress, Servitude, Death itself,
 the most pusillanimous, are sometimes able
 to confront with Steadiness. But the most
 humble, scarce know how to bear being
 utterly despised; and the more magnani-
 mous a Soul is, the less is it season'd to,
 and the more unfitted for brooking Con-
 tempt. Every Individual thinks he has,
 and really has, some Significance in him;
 and to rob him of That by a kind of an-
 nihilating Scorn, is the accutest Sting our

Revenge can level. To forbear Revenge then from a Principle of Scorn, is not the Forgiveness of Heart which Christ expects from You.

Neither can it be that Sort of Forgiveness, which extends barely to the not retaliating *Evil* for *Evil*. To be externally reconciled to one whom we look upon as an Enemy, and to withhold the Effects of our Hatred from him, may possibly be of some Service to him, but can be none to us, while we secretly cherish a rancorous Remembrance of his former Injuries. To forgive, and not to forget, as much as in us lies, is doing our Duty but by halves. It is impossible wilfully to dwell on the Offence with Disgust, without more or less cherishing a Dislike to the Offender, contrary to the Injunction of Christ, to forgive him from our Hearts. What then, can it avail us to check the outward Shootings of Passion, while we foment it at the Root? Since by erring in one part of this great Law, we shall be found defective in the Whole.

Lastly, the Forgiveness which we Christians are to practise, must not be merely Philosophic, like that of *Plato*, who never allow'd himself the Liberty even to think of his Enemies, merely from a desire of effacing out of his Mind and Heart, the
very

very Idea of Such Persons as offended him, in Imitation of Nature which labours to destroy whatever is contrary to itself. No, Christian, no: It is the Crime and not the Criminal, you ought to forget. In granting Pardon to an Offender, 'tis the Fulness of Charity to forget the Offence, but it is the Height of Revenge, to blot out of your Mind the Remembrance of his Person. In so doing, as much as in you lies, you annihilate him, you reduce him to nothing. Since were the Almighty to do the like by him, he would become nothing indeed.

The Mercy then which you are to practise as a Christian, is a generous and sincere Compassion at Heart for your Neighbour's Frailties, accompanied with a chearful Readiness for God's Sake to excuse, remit, and forget as much as possible any Injuries he may have done You, still remembering his Person, to love him, and to serve him, when Occasion shall offer. This, Christian, this is the Charity God expects from you, and prefers to all other Victims You can offer to him. *I will Mercy, (says he) and not Sacrifice.*

It is inconsistent with the Divine Justice, for God to accept the Sacrifice of the Unmerciful. No: He who can reject the Petition of his offending Neighbour, will be rejected by God whenever he sues. *The*

Same Measure you Measure to others, shall be measured to you again, says the Almighty. The Holy Scriptures, and all History Sacred and Prophane are full of Instances, in which God has fulfill'd this terrible Threat. Every-one knows the Use to which the Divine Equity applied that very Gibbet, which *Haman's* Revenge had erected for the harmless *Mordockee*. Nor need I tell you, that the impious Enemies of the *Jews* were almost at the same time, by the just Judgment of God, involved in the Ruin their Resentment had plotted against his chosen People. And why was God thus severe to them, but because, by giving themselves up to Enmity and Hatred, they had renounced his holy Fear. For as *Job* justly observes. *He who withdraws Mercy from his Neighbour, has lost the Fear of God.* And therefore says St. JAMES, *Judgment without Mercy shall be used to him who does not do Mercy.*

Thus the Enemies of *Daniel*, for wickedly carrying Resentment so far as to expose him to the Rage of Lions, were by God's Almighty Arm plunged into the Destruction they had prepared for him. And now we are talking of *Daniel*, did not God, by his Mouth give a miraculous Instance of his Divine Equity, in inflicting on the two perfidious Elders, the very Shame
and

and Death which their Revenge had machinated against the innocent *Susanna*. So often does God, even in this Life, retort on the Revengeful, the Mischiefs, they meditate against their real or fancied Enemies.

But in the Cases I have mention'd, the Revenge was unjust you'll say. True, and what then? How often, alas is our Resentment full as unjust! How often do our Chimeras make Enemies even of our best Friends! That Superior, who reproved our unruly Conduct ---- this Inferior, whose Virtues are perhaps a Toil to our Irregularities ---- and that Equal, who refused to be accessory to some favorite Sin we had in View ---- all become alike the Objects of our unjust Hatred, are set at bay by us; and our Revenge, ten-to-one, is never glutted till we have run them down to Death, Distress, or at least to Disgrace, if in our Power. Can this be Christian, can this be even Human, or can there be any thing in it to screen us from the Resentment of God, whom we ourselves have so grossly offended? Ah! Christians, where is the Forgiveness of Heart, which Christ demands? Ah! How unlike is this Behaviour to that which his immense Charity set us an Example of, when naked, bleeding, and expiring on the Cross! So far from
loading

loading the Authors of his Agony with the Effects of Revenge, he becomes their Advocate, *Father forgive them, for they know not what they do.* And we on the contrary, set up our Friends for Enemies and hunt them to Destruction, for not seconding the Treachery of our Passions. O Folly! Madness! What shall I call it? ---- For shame Christians, for shame, blush at the very Thought of such Antichristian Conduct, if you are not innocent of it, and tremble at it if guilty. For so shall, &c. unless you repent and forgive.

Don't imagin, Beloved, that I mean only to dissuade you from that Revenge, which you yourselves must own to be unjust. No: Let me inform you that no Revenge whatever can be just, in one who is a Sinner; however gross the Injury be on which it is grounded, whatever be the Condition of the Offender, great or little, poor or rich, good or wicked, Catholic, Heretic, or Infidel. And consequently as All Mankind are Sinners, no Man can be within the Reach of the Divine Mercy who is revengeful to his Neighbour.

For the clear Understanding of this, I must premise to you two things. *First*, that God's Mercy ever goes Hand in Hand with his Justice. And therefore tho' in his infinit Goodness he condescends to provide the
greatest

greatest of Sinners with Means of Attainment, and with Grace to make use of them; yet if a Sinner perversely will reject those Means, and that Grace, God must still be God, and cannot be so inequitable or weakly compassionate, as to shew Mercy at the Expence of his Justice. *Secondly*, we must all be obliged to own that our Neighbours, comparatively speaking, cannot become Debtors to us but in very trivial Matters, whether it be by Offences they have committed against us, or by Obligations we have laid upon them; both they and we being, by the Limitedness of our Natures, confined to act within a finite, very narrow Sphere: Whereas it is quite otherwise between God and Us. We are All to a Man Insolvent Debtors to him in an infinite Sum; and therefore tho' it might be perhaps rigorous Justice, yet it would still be irreproachable Justice in him, was he to insist upon an infinite Satisfaction from us, or in Lieu of it (as we have it not to give) an eternal Punishment.

Surely then, it must be allow'd a merciful Condescension in God to compound with, and acquit us of so immense a Debt for a trifling Acknowledgment. Do we not owe him inexpressible Thanks that He will deign to clear us of an infinite Debt, on the easy Condition of our rubbing out a finite
trivial

trivial Score of our Neighbour? With what Joy and readiness ought we not to accept such seasonable Terms! And this, Christian, is an offer he continually makes you. He requires not of you a Multiplicity of Prayers, which may interrupt the State of Life he has call'd you to; a continued Series of impracticable Fasts beyond the Strength of your Constitution to bear; nor yet an accumulated Heap of costly Sacrifices? No. He expects you to *pray*, 'tis true, and to *pray incessantly*, but how? Not like those Hypocrites of whom he complains, *who Honour him with their Lips, but whose Hearts are far from him*. No: But as I have somewhere read in the Fathers, *He prays incessantly to GOD who always loves him*. This then, Christian, is the incessant Prayer God especially likes, that you give him Proofs of your Love to him, by being merciful to your Neighbour in pardoning the Faults you find in, and the Injuries you receive from him.

Both God and his Church, direct you to try to Ballance your Accompts with frequent Fasts, where your Health will permit. Yet the principal Fasts which the Almighty sets a Value upon, are those of the Heart: And they can noways affect your Constitution. One Fast of Resentment will outweigh a whole Life of Abstinence from

from Food: Whereas let your Fasts exceed those of all the Fathers of the Desert they can be of no Efficacy, but hateful in the Sight of God, while you are revengeful. For

The building Temples to his Honour; erecting Altars in them for his Worship; and making those Altars frequently smoke with Incense, and repeated Victims to his Honour are undoubtedly grateful Offices from a Creature to his Creator: But that only from such as have first consecrated their Hearts into living Temples of his Grace, raised in them Altars of Mercy, and on them sacrificed to him their private Rancour against their offending Brethren. Without this Disposition 'tis vain to build Temples, to found Hospitals, or to erect Altars. They are less guilty of Sacrilege, who pull down Churches and lay waste the Places of Divine Service built with Hands, than they are who erase in their Hearts the Altar of Brotherly Mercy. All Victims inferior to fraternal Forgiveness are so offensive to God, from him who reserves to himself the Sacrifice of his own Wrath, that Christ warns us never to insult God by approaching to his Altar in such a Disposition. Nay, if thro' Inadvertency we should chance to do it; he charges us to leave the Sacrifice unoffer'd to go and be reconciled to our offending Neighbour: And this not once

only, nor twice; but seventy times seven times, *that is*, in short as often as he shall injure you. So ungrateful to God is every Sacrifice which is not accompanied with Brotherly Charity!

No Man You see then, Christian, let the Sacrifice in his Hand be ever so great, is fit to approach the Altar of God, without bringing Mercy and Peace in his Heart. In the Annals of the Church we read of an unhappy Wretch, who, tho' in the Act of sacrificing his Life for the Name of Christ, was rejected by God and sunk into the Number of the Reprobates for want of this Charity. Upon the Point of receiving the Crown of Martyrdom, after a tedious Train of the most accute Torments heroically suffer'd, he was approach'd by one whom he had long been at Variance with, and who now threw himself at the suffering Martyr's Feet to implore his Forgiveness. But the unhappy Creature, who had conquer'd all the Cruelties of his Tyrants, would not conquer his own Resentment, refused to forgive his suppliant Enemy, and God so detested the Sacrifice of his Flesh, unaccompanied with that of his Heart, that he withdrew his Grace from him and permitted him to deny Christianity; which he had no sooner done than he expired, and sunk to that utter Darknefs which he purchased

chased at so dear a Rate, and lost the glorious Crown he might have secured at so cheap a One. So disagreeable to God is every the greatest Sacrifice of an unmerciful Man! And so true are the Words of St. PAUL, *if I deliver up my Body to be burnt and have not Charity, it avails me Nothing!* What then, O Catholics, will it avail you to be Such and to suffer as you do for being Such, if you do not excel Protestants in Universal Charity and Brotherly Forgiveness?

If then you would have your Sufferings acceptable to God; if you mean to make Your Sacrifices grateful to him, let them be crown'd with Charity. If you have that you will always be in a Condition to Sacrifice. Where do we find that ever a merciful Man was rejected by the Almighty for want of another Victim. On the contrary he deigns to accept of Mercy alone as a compleat Victim from him who has no others to bring. *He who does Mercy, says the Prophet, offers Sacrifice.* Say then, O Christian, what can be more reasonable than the Demands of God? Must we not be out of our Senses to reject such easy Terms from so infinit a Creditor who has the Right and Power to exact the Whole? Or say will it be wiser in us to exact from our Neighbour the slight Satisfaction of our Revenge, and leave to God the Necessity

of exerting his. If we chuse the Latter do we not justify the utmost Rigour of God's Judgment against us?

Nay, the Divine Severity, which would otherwise be but nice Justice, becomes downright Mercy. For surely it must be own'd in some Sense Mercy in a Judge to leave to a Criminal the Power of chusing his own Sentence: And if the Criminal will chuse Condemnation instead of Pardon, is the Mercy of the Judge less in granting him what he both deserves and insists upon? And what other do we do, in gratifying Revenge, than declare that we prefer rigorous Justice to saving Mercy? When we beg GOD to *forgive us our trespasses as we forgive them who trespass against us*, and at the same time load them with the most bitter Effects of our Resentment; what else do we do but intreat GOD to deal as severely by us as we do by them? And too much alas have we reason to fear, that he will hear our Prayer. The only way then to repeat this Divine Prayer with any Safety is to be always in Peace with our worst Enemies. In a word, if you not only stifle the Effects of Resentment but forgive your Enemies from your Heart, and not only forgive the Offender but endeavour to forget the Offence; GOD will do the same by you. For the Merciful *shall find Mercy*.
Otherwise

Otherwise remember the Fate of the unmerciful Servant in this Gospel, who was deliver'd into the Hands of the Torturers. If you imitate him in his Cruelty, expect to follow him in his Punishment. For *so shall my heavenly Father do to you, if you forgive not Every-one his Brother from your Hearts.* Mercy then, Dear Christians Mercy. And O All-gracious JESUS inspire thy Christians with it: I beseech thee, *In the Name, &c.*



SERMON



S E R M O N

On the Twenty-second SUNDAY after

P E N T E C O S T.

St. MATTHEW xxii. 20, 21.

Whose is this Image and Superscription?

Cesar's. Restore then what is Cesar's to Cesar, and to GOD what is of GOD.



THAT I could but be sure of finding One human Creature in all this Multitude to converse with! How would I bless my Maker for creating me a sociable Being! Day as it is, what would I not give for a Lanthorn to find out one real Man of either Sex. You seem'd alarm'd, Beloved. What you cry is the Man blind? Or what do you make of all of us? Surely You do not take us for Monsters? Or is it not enough to have once unchristen'd us unless you even try to unman us. What outrageous

outrageous Usage is this! Hold, Beloved; be not angry without Reason. I entertain no monstrous Ideas of you. The Figures of None of you startle me, and your Actions I know not enough of to be offended at or pleased with them. If you do not unman yourselves 'tis not in my Power to do it. I neither presume to say you are not human; nor can I take upon me to vouch that You are such, because your Forms do not Shock me. I only then ask a modest Question. And surely a Question may be ask'd where a Doubt may arise. If you are not really what you pass for; the Question is not improper: And if you are; you have Reason rather to be pleased than displeased at a Doubt which affords you the Opportunity of asserting Your Dignity. Suppose me then for a few Minutes an absolute Sceptic, so absorb'd in Doubt and Uncertainty that I cannot believe my own Eyes: Or think me at least a *Didymus* who cannot give into any Belief but what is made palpable to me: How would you go about to convince me that you are all of You Individuals of Mankind. As for You Ladies, for so I must call you to keep your Attention in Humour; Since Miracles abstracted, where is the Woman who would not be a Lady even at the Foot of God's Altar. As for You, You I know will have
immediate

immediate Recourse to your Glasses. Well, be it so: What do they say? Why surely these Eyes, this Mouth, these Features cannot but be Human. Why so? The very Fish in the Sea have Eyes and Mouth and Features as well as You; and full as comely in their Kind tho' not distorted by Affectation as yours often are. But then they have Scales and Fins and You have None. You walk upon two Feet; So do the Birds of the Air, in this however superior to You that they can inhabit the purer Regions of the Skies, while you are reduced to cling to your Mother Earth. But you make use of articulate Sounds; so can many of them with this Advantage above you that they never pervert them with Design. But You have no Feathers. You are sleek, upright and gaudy. Alas has not the gaudy foolish Peacock greater room to pride in Feathers all it's own, than you to Glory in your borrow'd Plumes? Still you have Sagacity and Art and Industry: So has the timid Hare, the fearful Hind and the laborious Ant; look but around the fourfooted Creation and you may gain Improvement. But 'tis encountering the Wind to reason thus at Toilets where Nothing scarcely but the Stroke of Death can satisfy a Self-admirer that She is not something more than even Mortal. Let me then turn to You robuster Sex, what better

better proofs can you alledge for being human. You want not Glasses to enhance your Pride. You know by rote that you are Lords and Masters of this wide Creation, nay nothing less than Sovereign Lords, if one may credit you; and That, not only over Birds and Beasts and all beneath them, but even over those your equal Mates, but weaker Vessels. Yet what have you to prove your being human more than these? If you have no more to prove you so than your exterior form and inward strength and little artifices; can I call you Men? No: Man is something more than a mere absolute unfeather'd upright Animal. Man is a noble Being form'd by God to his own image. "So are we, *you'll both reply*: We "have a Will, a Memory and Understand-
 "ing to resemble him: We are endow'd
 "with Souls immortal too, like his, and su-
 "perscribed by him." Now you say something, Brethren, and I'll own you Men and happy Men. But I have one Scruple yet. The Holy Ghost informs me in the book of WISDOM, that God *indeed created Man immortal; and made him to the image of his likeness; but through the envy of the devil death enter'd into the World, and they who take part with him become like him.* Now are you Men according to God's forming you, or have you suffer'd Satan to efface

his blessed image in you? You have immortal Souls enrich'd with Will, with Memory and Understanding: But are they stamp'd with a similitude of Purity to his? Are they superscribed with his distinguishing Grace? Or is your Will stamp'd with earthly Affections? Is your Memory fill'd with any thing foreign to God? Is your Understanding impress'd with the maxims of the World more than of Heaven? In a word, *whose is the Image and Superscription* on your Souls? Not *Cesar's*, I hope; not *Satan's* the avow'd Prince of the World. No, Dear Saviour, thou has't long since promised that the Judgment of the World should be at an end, and the Prince of this World be banish'd from our hearts. And so I hope he is from yours, Beloved. Enough is it that the World and it's Followers bear his Image and Inscription. What have you to do with either, but to renounce them? You are stamp'd in your Creation with a glorious image: You have received an invaluable Superscription in your Redemption. And whose is this Image and this Superscription? It is of God, Beloved: It is of the great God. Ah Christians! If then you have usurp'd from *Cesar*, from the Prince of this World, any thing which belongs to him; renounce it, give it back. In a word, *Restore to Cesar what is Cesar's,*
and

and to God *what is of God*. This I dare say (such is my favorable Opinion of you) you will be glad nay eager to effect; when once I have shewn you, as I now intend to do;

I. The Importance of preserving in your Souls the glorious Image of Almighty God, unblemish'd: *And*

II. The Excess of grateful Love you owe him for mercifully deigning to make you like him.

“ O thou too amorous Lord, who, purposely to pique us with a laudable Ambition to be truly Images of thee, did’st mercifully leave thy heavenly Throne and dwell among us! Oh! let not so much Bounty be all lost upon us: But since thou did’st even chuse to be exalted on a Cross, to place thyself in fuller view to us; keep our Attention fix’d to this blest’d Form till we become not only like, but even One with, thee.”

I. *David* prophetically contemplating the Excess of Goodness, which the eternal Son of God express’d in coming down on Earth to pay an ineffable Visit of Redemption to Mankind, breaks out into an exstastic Rapture of Admiration and grateful Love. O my God, says he! *What is Man, that thou*

ar't mindful of him? Or the Son of Man, that thou do'st visit him. Ah! David has't thou forgotten the Excellence of Human Nature? Do'st thou not know that this fair Creature, Man, this last great favorit Master-piece of the Almighty's Hand, is of a kindred Nature with his Divine Creator; rich in a Soul the very Breath of God; and made to reflect the Image of it's heavenly Parent both in Male and Female? Yes, yes, my God, says the transported PSALMIST. *Thou has't made him little inferior to the Angels, with Glory and Honour thou has't crown'd him, and has't appointed him over the Works of thy Hands. Thou has't subjected all things under his feet, Sheep and Oxen, moreover also the Beasts of the field.* O glorious Creature Man! Such is the Excellence of thy exalted Nature. Such thy Original Dignity; created little inferior to the Angels; created to lord it over the Universe besides, and created to reflect the Likeness of him from whom thy Dominion is derived. How then, Beloved, ought not you to pique yourselves upon expressing that noble Image in which your greatest Excellence consists! How jealous ought you not to be of maintaining that Superiority which your gracious God invests you with! Not by an empty Strut or self-elating Arrogance, but by consistency of Conduct in exerting that

that Intelligence in which your Superiority is placed. *Tully*, tho' but a Pagan, tells you that " it behoves every Man inasmuch as " he is Man, not to degenerate from the " Dignity of Man. " But how do you degenerate, and how unlike yourselves are you ; if, stamp'd with your Creator's likeness, your Actions quite efface his Image ; if, little inferior to the Angels, your groveling Appetites are suffer'd to place you on a level with those irrational Creatures over which the Almighty gave you Reason to preside ! " There is Difference, says St. *Augustin*, " between the Life of Brutes, the Life " of Man and the Life of Angels : The " Life of Brutes seeks only what is earthly ; " the Life of Angels seeks only what is " heavenly ; and the Life of Man is constituted between that of Angels and that " of Brutes. The Man therefore who lives " according to the Flesh is upon a level " with Brutes, while he who lives according to the Spirit is a Companion for " Angels."

So true is this reasoning of St. *Augustin*, that if we look but back to our Grand-fire *Adam* we shall find, that, while he preserved his Innocence, while he kept within him, uneffaced, the Image of God, and persevered in Obedience to the God he was created

created like, he was not only a Companion for Angels; but even the Almighty himself deign'd to commune with him familiarly. And how alas did he degrade himself and his Posterity of this desirable Excellence? O how I blush for my unthinking Parent, when I reflect on this Weakness! Why---a servil groveling Appetite to what was earthly sunk both him and his Posterity from a familiarity with God, from the Society with Angels, to an equality with Brutes. Happy and Great and free under Obedience to the Almighty he could not, *that is*, he would not remain so: God says to him: *thou shalt not touch this Tree.* "Why so Lord? If "it be good why may not I touch it; if it "be Evil what has it to do in Paradise? "Certainly it's being here speaks it's Goodness, why then may I not touch it?" Because I will have you Obedient. The Tree is good, but my Command is better. Therefore I will not have you touch it. I am your Lord, you are my Servant; I am the Substance, you are the Shadow, and therefore are to be attach'd to me. How can you be attach'd to me but by Obedience to my Precept? This then is Cause sufficient. If you wont think it so; renounce to being my Servant, my Image and my Shadow; or otherwise adhere to me. There is a Good in

in tasting of this Tree, but 'tis fatal Good, the Good of earthly Knowledge: There is a Good in leaving it untouch'd, a solid Good, the Good of Obedience; and that is heavenly because 'twill keep my Image inviolable in you. Take then your Choice: For both you may not have. Man took his Choice in fact; but ah the wretched Choice! The heavenly would not satisfy him: He liked what is earthly better. He chose it; effaced God's Image in his Soul; and miserably fell from the Divine Familiarity to the Society of Brutes, whom he was first made superior to.

Thus, Christians, thus did Man's groveling Appetite for earthly Good give birth to sin; thus did sin efface God's sacred Image in his breast; and thus through Satan's envy did Death enter into the world: And Man by taking part with him became like him. O glorious Creature Man! To what a depth art thou fallen! How has thy Strength forsaken thee! How is thy Beauty faded! *How art thou fallen from Heaven, O Lucifer, who didst rise in the morning!* Now thou has't effaced the Image of God in thy heart, to liken thyself to Satan, the *Cesar* and Prince of this World, in pursuing with the Beasts of the Earth the Pleasures of the Earth! *O that thou had'st but known in thy days (of Innocence) the heavenly things*

things which pertain to thy Peace! How would'st thou not have loath'd all which is earthly! But now, alas, in the Night of original Sin and universal Corruption, they are hidden from thy Eyes. O hapless, deplorable Blindness! Man when he was in Honour did not understand, says the PSALMIST. He was compared to senseless Beasts and became like them. This, this is the wretched Fruit of Sensuality; this the Consequence of subjecting our Reason to our Passions, the Spirit to the Flesh. From Children and Images of God we are become the Slaves and Imitators of Satan: And, like him, preferring Self-love to the Love of God, we are fallen from the Society with Angels to the level with Brutes, nay beneath them. In this beneath them, that by our own Perversity we have compared ourselves to them. "It is worse, says St. John Chrysostom, to compare ourselves to Brutes than it would have been to be form'd such. To be naturally void of Reason is excusable: The poor Beasts who are so did not make themselves. But for Man, adorn'd with Reason, to stoop himself to a sensual Comparison with irrational Beings is a Crime of the Will." And therefore inexcusable. O blind Perversity of Man to sink such native Excellence to so much Meaness! O noble Creature

ture where is thy Greatness now, plunged as thou art in an Abyss of Darkness? How shall thy Likeness to thy God appear, through the thick Night of Original Sin in which thou art buried?

O thou eternal Wisdom! Thou inexterminable Light! Thou only canst disperse the Clouds of Sin and Error, which darken this thy once loved Image. O Heavens, pour down your Dew then from above; and let your Clouds rain down the Just. Let the Earth open and bring us forth a Saviour; which has brought forth such Sinners. Restore O God, thy once loved Image Man to his first Dignity. Let Grace appear and Satan's Likeness and Characters be raised; that thy bless'd Image may be seen again in all its Brightness. This, Christians, God has long since done. Unwilling to leave the Image of his Glory, his favorite Creature a prey to the Infernal Enemy, he sent his Son, his dear, his only Son, to efface the Serpent's Likeness in him and renew his own, and this he has effected with his precious Blood, taking Man's Nature on himself, to link us more inseparably to him. View him upon his Cross, and View him attentively. Reflect what he has done and suffer'd for You, to draw you to a Likeness to himself. The First Man he created so like himself, that he was little

inferior in that Likeness to the Angels; and tho' that Likeness was effaced by Original Sin, so strongly has his Mercy renew'd with his Blood, and by his Hypostatic Union of Human Nature to his own, that he has even rais'd Mankind above the Angels.

For which of the Angels did he vouchsafe to die, when they by Pride had fallen from their Likeness to him? No this was a Favour he reserv'd alone for his more favorit Image Man. When Satan erased God's Image from his Soul by his Revolt; him and his rebel Followers he hurl'd into unutterable Misery, for the first Offences; But such was his Excess of Love for you, O Man, that after Numberless Offences, by which you had become of Satan's Part, and suffer'd his foul Likeness to efface the Semblance of your Maker; he to make you like, nay, one with him, stoop'd to become both like, and One with You. Ah! Christians be awake. Shall God then think it of such Importance to have you like himself, and you not think it so. Shall your Creator and Redeemer for this be at such Cost and Pains, and you think it much to be at any. O unexhausted Bounty! Who can endure this Sweet Extreme of thy unpurchased Love, and not be melted into Eagerness to love thee with an equal Flame.
Ah!

'Ah! What can'st thou, My God, be better, greater, or more happy than thou art, for our being like thee? Thou wast forever blest e'er we were made, and would'st be equally the same were we destroy'd. He made us, Christians, for ourselves, he wants us not; 'tis we want him. And therefore, 'tis that he would have us like him, that by belonging to him he may belong to us. The Soul of Man, he therefore made his Image by making it immortal and indissoluble that we might be forever his. "The
 " Image, says St. *Augustin*, properly belongs
 " to the Form whose Image it is, the Fi-
 " gure to the Nature." If then you are
 his Images, his Figures, do you not belong
 to him? The Pride, the Avarice, the Lusts,
 and the Vanities of the World, then have
 nothing to do in your Hearts. They are
 the Images of *Cesar*, Satan the Prince of
 the World, and are inscribed by him.
 Whereas your Souls are stamp'd with an
 infinitely nobler Image, and inscribed with
 immortal Charity. And whose is this Image
 and Supercription? It is of God. Ah!
 Christians, be then yourselves be, just to
 God, and just even to Satan. Restore to
 him what is his: You have no right to it.
Give then to Cesar what is Cesar's, and to
God what is of God. Renounce to Satan,
 the Poms, the Vanities of the World, and

the Lusts of the Flesh, and give up wholly your Minds, your Hearts, your Souls to God, whose Images they are.

II. If You but seriously consider the infinity of God's Goodness to you in making them Such; I am convinced the generous Sentiments of Soul, you all seem full of, will make you eager to do it, from a Principle of grateful Love. I scorn at present to make use of the low Arguments, of eternal Threats or Promises, to induce you to resolve on doing God this Justice. As You, I hope, scorn to stand in need of such mere servil, Mercenary Motives. No, let Slaves be spurr'd by Whips or Hire. You are Free Children of the Almighty, made Free by that Liberty, which Christ purchased You at the price of his precious Blood. There needs no more then to make you grateful, than to set his Favours to you in your View. The shewing you how greatly he has loved you first, will sure suffice to melt you into Love for him. And needs there any other Instance of his Love than this, of making you the living Pictures of himself? The noble Copies of his heavenly Countenance? This glorious Semblance of him in you, he made not by the Intervention of any other Being inferior to himself. No, God himself, that
nothing

nothing might be wanting in you to resemble him, drew out the noble Plan by his eternal Wisdom; He too, by his own infinit Power, brought you to Light with his hand Divine; Good as he is Great completed you by his unparell'd Beauty, and to give Life to your Resemblance of him, breathed into you an Emanation of himself. Ah! Can such Love then deserve to be slighted? Or can you overpay it, should you even dissolve with Love for him?

If your own Pictures, those Pictures you are so fond of for being such, were capable of Love, who would think they ought to love so much as you yourselves whom they resemble? Much more if they were made by your own Hands, would you expect upon a double Score that there Affections should be center'd in you. From your own Children you expect the strongest Proofs of Love, because they are like you, and more because yourselves were instrumental to that Likeness. Ah! Can you then without Shame refuse your Love to God, whom you resemble so much more, who was not barely instrumental to your being like him, but is the first and supreme Source of what you are; who made you like him and gave you Souls on purpose too to love him? Why did he make that Heart of Man so great and so capacious, that all the Universe
of

of mere created Beings can't suffice to fill it? Why, but that God alone might fill it? "Yes! God, says St. *Augustin*, our Hearts "are uneasy, unsatiated and restless, till "they repose in thee."

Well gracious Maker, thy Bounty is as evident as 'tis ineffable. We own with Pride, a grateful Pride, that we are like thee, nay, thy very Images, and therefore properly belong to thee, whose Hands beneficent have made us so. With all the Gratitude our Souls are capable of, we praise thee for this Likeness. O suffer not one spark of foreign Love to strain, disfigure, or efface it in us. But graciously embellish it with an encrease of Grace, making us still more comely Images, and more resembling thee. O let the precious Fountain of thy Sacred Blood supply us with continual Helps, to love and copy still more after thee in every virtuous Practise. In Patience, Fortitude, in Charity to all Mankind, and Sovereign Love for thee.

But ah! Christians, why do we ask all this? Why, but to grant us this, did God's eternal Son stoop from the Heavens his Glory, when Sin through Satan's Artifice had sullied in the Soul of Man the Brightness of his Image? So grieved was he to see his well, his dear-loved Creature Man, bereft of all his Excellence, by losing this, that

that he descended from his heavenly Throne, and took his very Image on himself to purify, reform it, and re-establish it, in all it's native Beauty. To this did all his Labours tend, all his Sufferings; and all the Blood he shed was shed for this. Now all he requires of us in return is, that we keep this Sacred Image in the pure State he has restored it to. That we fully it no more with Sin, nor thrust it from our Souls to give Reception to the Likeness of the Prince of Darkness, by hankering after what is his, the Pride, the Lusts, and vain Allurements of the Flesh or World. And to encourage us to make him this return, he graciously promises to recompense our Struggles to be like him, with such Additions of abounding Grace as shall improve our Likeness to him. Ah! Why my Soul, then do'st thou not labour without cease to beautify this Likeness of thy God? Why do'st thou not toil by Day, by Night, still to be more and more like him. O Sovereign Author of my Soul, whose bounteous Hands have made me to thy Likeness, whose precious Blood has wash'd away the Stains which Sin first soil'd this Image with, O sprinkle us with the Hyssop of thy Grace, that we may keep this Image clean as thou did'st make it by thy Death and Sacraments.

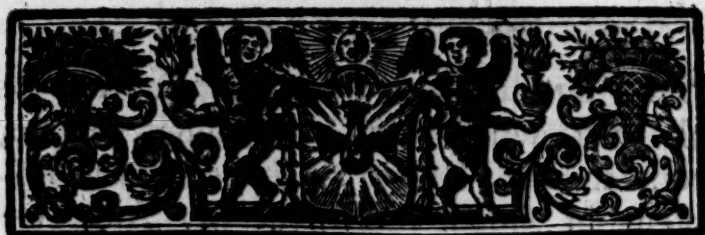
This,

This, Christians, God is ready to accord. But he requires still that You should do your Parts. He who made you, and made you like himself, without you, will neither save you, nor preserve you like him, without you. He expects you to make use of the Freedom and Grace he has given you to renounce, the empty Enjoyments of the Earth where they are opposit to the Enjoyment of him. They are the Properties of Satan, the *Cesar* and Prince of this World, For they are stamp'd with his Likeness and Inscription. You then have nothing to do with them, You are Immortal Beings and superscribed in your Baptism, with the indelible Characters of Grace. And whose Images and Superscription are these? Are they not of the living God? To him then they properly belong, and you cannot without Injustice as well as Ingratitude withhold them from him. Restore then, Beloved, restore in the Name of JESUS, *Restore to Cesar what is Cesar's, and to GOD what is of God.*

Yes, loving Lord, we will, with cheerfulness, even from this Minute, we renounce to Satan whatever is his, whatever is not pleasing in thy Sight, the Flesh, the World and all Affections to it, incompatible with the Love of thee. To thee alone we give our Senses, Souls, and all we have to give thee.

thee. But ah, dear God thou knowest us full well, what poor frail Things we are, prone in our Flesh to all that's ill, and impotent in Good. Without thy Aid, we may again disfigure these precious Images of thee with fresh Offences, but without thee, in vain we labour to adorn them or preserve them clean as thou has't wash'd them. O by that unexhausted Mercy then, by that Divine Excess of Love which moved thee to delineate thyself in us, we ardently implore thee to protect us all with thy improving efficacious Grace, that we may never faint or be tired in loving thee, but daily more and more advance in Virtue and likening ourselves to thee, till thou shal't think us fit to be admitted to the Enjoyment of thee. And that the Almighty may hear our humble Prayer. I earnestly beseech him, *In the Name, &c.*





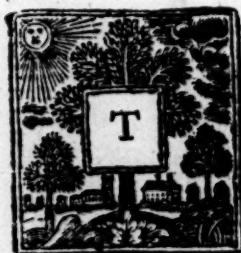
S E R M O N

On the Twenty-third SUNDAY after

P E N T E C O S T.

St. MATTHEW ix. 20. 21.

And behold a Woman which was troubled with an Issue of Blood twelve Years, came behind him, and touch'd the Hem of his Garment. For she said within herself, if I shall touch only his Garment, I shall be safe.



THE Whole Life of Christ without Impropriety, may be said to be a kind of divinely well-order'd Poem, every incidental Action of which is a heavenly Episode, design'd at once for our Edification and Instruction. This appears no where more evident

evident than in the present Gospel; the main Action of which is the raising to Life the dead Daughter of a certain Prince: A Miracle, which, if taken even in a literal Sense is one of the greatest Christ ever perform'd on a human Body; but, if explain'd in the figurative Sense it includes, comprehends the great End of all his Miracles, the supernatural Re-animation of the Soul: A Miracle, in a word, which, while it enforces our Faith in the Mysteries reveal'd to us, urges our Compliance with the Precepts enjoin'd us. However as the whole Life of Christ must be (like the seamless Garment his Holy Mother wrought him) all of a Piece, it was impossible he should leave the least Interval of it, unfill'd with miraculous Proofs of his Divinity and inefable Instances of his Sovereign Goodness. And therefore tho' the Space could be but short, between his hearing the Prince's Grievance and his redressing it; yet, short as it was, he fill'd it up, you see, with a Miracle by the Way almost equal to that, which he was principally intent to perform.

Thus far may suffice to give you a general Notion of the Contents of this Gospel; and to shew you that the Whole is so pregnant with Mystery, and too rich in Instruction, to admit of a full Explanation of all its Parts, in the narrow Compass of one Even-

ing's Lecture. For this Reason, I shall at present intirely confine myself to consider the incidental Part of it, which alone is sufficient to furnish us with ample Matter of Spiritual Improvement.

It is pretty evident that the Woman, who could rely on the Hem of Christ's Garment for a Remedy to her Disease, must necessarily have a strong and lively Faith in the Virtue issuing from his Sacred Body: And 'tis equally evident, from the Success of her Application, that her Faith was not ill-grounded. Every Christian must acquiesce to this: And every Catholic, I dare say, in reading this Gospel is excited at once to admire and envy this Woman for her Faith and Success. Yet who can believe as much, if we are to judge of the Sentiments of Christians by their Conduct?

If the Hem of our Saviour's Garment contain'd such Virtue, that the bare Touch of it, would Cure an inveterate obstinate Disease of many Years standing; what Virtue must not his Body itself contain? And if his Body alone is of such Efficacy, that the simple Touch of it is sufficient to remove all our corporal Complaints. What Benefit might not be expected to a distemper'd Soul, which inwardly receives not only his Body but his Soul; not only his Human Nature but his Godhead? To what Cause then shall I impute

pute it, that Christians, that Catholics, who have a sure and speedy Remedy for all their Ills, ever ready at hand to apply to in the Person of Christ, linger on as they do in a dangerous habitual Complication of Spiritual Diseases? Would it not be a Shame, Christians, to suppose You want Faith, who pretend to admire it in this Woman? And would it not seem inconsistent to suppose you to envy her Success, and yet not to be wishful to succeed yourselves? Yet what laudable Envy can I believe you capable of, who neglect the same Remedy, tho' more eminently within your Reach, as it daily is in the Holy Sacrament of the Altar? You cannot surely doubt of the Truth of a Mystery, which, tho' so much above the Reach of Human Reason, is still so consonant with it. No, You cannot, it is impossible you should, doubt of a Point of Faith you suffer so much to maintain. Blush then, O Christians, to think that convinced of the Sovereign Efficacy of this Divine Remedy, you want to be put in mind of applying to it, and applying in such a Manner as may render you worthy of reaping Benefit from it. Are you not all sick at Soul, much more than in Body? But how Few of You all, are as eager as the Poor infirm Woman of this Gospel, to sue to Christ for your Remedy? And even of the
the

the Few who do apply to him, how small is the Number of Those, who, following the Example they affect to admire in her, approach to him with the Reverence and Devotion due to so awful a Sacrament. But I'll forbear Reproaches; and endeavour to remove the Causes of them in you, by briefly shewing you,

I. The Necessity and Advantages of frequent approaching to Christ in the Holy Eucharist; *to which I shall add:*
And

II. Some of the Motives and Means, to excite and qualify you to approach worthily.

“ Worthily did I say? Ah, Lord of
 “ Hosts, let us do all we can, we must
 “ still own ourselves unworthy of approach-
 “ ing to Thee, or being approach'd to by
 “ Thee. Ah, go out then from us Lord,
 “ for we are Men and Sinners, Thou our
 “ God and infinitely aversed to Sin. Ah
 “ Lord! We are not worthy that thou
 “ should'st enter under our Roofs. Say
 “ only the Word, and our Souls shall be
 “ heal'd. What Lord, will not thy Love
 “ in healing us sufficiently appear, unless
 “ thou make thyself not only our Physi-
 “ cian but our Food? Not only our Guest
 “ even our Intimate. O purify us then
 “ and

“ and fit our Souls for thy Reception, and
 “ since we cannot be compleatly worthy
 “ of thee in this Life, make us at least
 “ as little unworthy as our Nature will
 “ permit.”

I. That Christ is really and physically present in the Holy Sacrament of the Eucharist. I have already proved in my Controversial Discourse on this Text: And therefore it will be needless here, to use any Arguments to establish a Point of Faith already proved; since any who are disposed to entertain the least Doubt of it, may have Recourse to That. Neither can it be necessary to bring any Proofs to confirm you, Christians, in a Belief, which as I have already observed, you so constantly maintain, under the greatest Disadvantages.

But what can it avail You, to believe Christ to be personally in the Blessed Sacrament, if you are not solicitous to apply to him for the Benefit he intended you in mercifully placing himself there? Why did He graciously stoop to veil his Glory under the humble Species of natural Food, but that you might approach with Confidence to receive in him your Soul's spiritual Food: A Food so necessary to it, that it cannot subsist without? *Unless you eat the Flesh of the Son of Man and drink his Blood, you shall have*

have no Life in you. It is plain then from these Words of our Saviour, that it is essentially necessary for every Christian to receive at least sometimes the Holy Sacrament of the Eucharist. But how often we should receive it, Christ left us no positive Rule; as if he thought it too stinging a Reproach to prescribe how often we should receive him; when on one Hand he is ever graciously ready to communicate himself to us; and we, on the other, stand ever in need of receiving him. Indeed the Church perceiving our spiritual Indolence, and how much we stand in need of a Spur in our Way to eternal Felicity, has thought proper to oblige us to apply to this ineffable Banquet at least once a Year, under Pain of being excluded her Flock. And yet with what Difficulty are we brought to comply? With what Reluctance do we submit? And how superficially do we dispose ourselves? Alas, O Man! What art thou? Vain, thoughtless, inconsistent Creature fond of thyself to a Folly, careless of thyself to Madness; blinded by Self-love, and by Self-neglect destroy'd. What Creature more persuaded of it's Worth than Man? Not *Lucifer* himself. What Insect more lavish of it's Being? Not the flame-courting Mother or Self-exposing Worm. Ask Man, who the World was created for? He will
answer,

answer, *for him*. Why were the Angels made? --- To guard *him*. Why was Christ incarnate? To redeem *him*. Why did he lead a painful, laborious Life? To instruct *him*. Why did he die on an ignominious Cross? To rescue *him* from eternal Death. Why did he rise and ascend triumphant into Heaven? To draw *him* thither after him. Why did he send his Divine Spirit in his Stead after his Departure? To pour on *him* the Grace and Lights necessary to Salvation. Ask him, in a word, why did God leave himself a perpetual Legacy in the Holy Sacrament? He will answer still that it was for and to *him*? Why, why is he daily offer'd on the Altar, exposed to the Eyes of the Faithful, or deposited in the sacred Tabernacle? To this End, Man will say, that he might be intimately united with *him*. So full is Man of himself, and so convinced of the Truth of his own Goodness!

Yet so unmindful is Man of his true Interests, so lavish is he of himself as to Sacrifice all these Advantages to giddy Indolence! O Christian, Christian! Slothful Christian! How much more inconsistent base and groveling is thy Pride than that of *Lucifer*! He, created the first and brightest of Angels, aspired to be like God: *I will ascend and will be like the Most High*. Tho'

form'd of the Dust of the Earth, yet invited to be one with God, in the Reception of him, ar't mean enough to slight the Honour. He, when he was damn'd, was damn'd for aspiring to be like the *Most High*; but you, if you are damn'd; will be so, because you would not be made God's yourselves, *that is*, one with God in the Reception of his precious Body and Blood. To whom could the Royal Prophet mean to speak, when he said: *I have said, ye are God's; and all of You Children of the MOST HIGH*? Was he not prophetically speaking to Christians, who, by Means of the Holy Eucharist have it in their Power to be intimately united with the Divine Being? But ah, how much more like *Devils*, nay, worse than *Devils* are not those Christians, who the Censures of the Church can scarce prevail on to reap this ineffable Blessing offer'd them, tho' but once a Year; and whom no Consideration can prevail on to lay hold of it oftener? How wil't thou, O *Lucifer* in the Day of Judgment reproach them, who possess'd of all thy Pride want the Courage to sanctify it, in aspiring to that Likeness with God which is offer'd to them, tho' deny'd thee!

Think not, O indolent Christian, that alledging your own Unworthiness, will be
any

any Plea to excuse your slothful Neglect of this Divine Remedy against Sin. No. Strictly speaking, none are truly worthy to receive the Body of our Lord. The most innocent are at best but the least unworthy. Still, the only way to become less unworthy of receiving it, is to receive it often. Therefore, is it offer'd alike to the Saint and the Sinner. To the Saint, to make him more perfect *that he who is a Saint, as David says, may be sanctified farther.* And to the Sinner that he may become a Saint, by this intimate Union with the Holy of Holies. For as the same Royal Prophet says, *with the Holy, you will be Holy.*

However great a State of Grace you may be in, O Christians, you are still in a State of Danger. *Let him then, among you, who thinks he stands, take care lest he fall.* And how shall you preserve yourselves from falling, amidst the infinite Dangers which threaten you perpetually on all sides, without receiving frequent Recruits of spiritual Vigour from this Fountain of all Strength? Have you not on one side the Allurements of a flattering World ever besieging you? Have you not on the other a malicious Train of infernal Enemies ever studious to shake your Constancy? And have you not the inbred Traitors, your Passions, lurking within you, ever awake to surprize you,

ever ready to betray you, when Grace shall grow faint or Virtue shall be unguarded? And what other certain Means of Safety have you amidst these manifold Dangers, but that of keeping up a perpetual Correspondence with your Divine Saviour, who alone is capable of securing you from the Power of all your Enemies? But how can you propose to keep up this Correspondence long, without frequently renewing your intimate Union with him in the Holy Sacrament of his Body and Blood? *He who eats my Flesh, and drinks my Blood, says Christ, abides in me and I in him.* If you abide in Christ and Christ in you, what have you to Fear, what have you not to Hope? If God is with you, who can be against you? On the contrary, if slighting the Grace you received in your former Communion you are dilatory in renewing, Christ will be as slow in augmenting it. In a word, he will be no more with you, nor you with him: And *He who is not with me, says he, is against me.* As you forget him to be your Protector, he will cease to look on you as his Ally; your spiritual Enemies will over-power you, You will fall from the State of Grace you are in; and your former Communions, instead of being of Advantage to you, will add to your Guilt and aggravate your Misery. So necessary is it for the best of Christians,

to

to approach frequently to the Holy Sacrament of the Eucharist.

Nor is it of less Importance for You, O Sinners! What tho' you are already become Slaves to Satan; tho' you are made Tributary to a Care-enhancing World; tho' you are fallen the half-devour'd Prey of your coarse-feeding Appetites; must you therefore remain so? Is your Case therefore so desperate as to admit of no Relief? Ah, Sinner! 'Tis the Illusion of those Enemies, who tyrannize over you. While You give ear to them your Evil is remediless. But if You will be relieved you may. While you are attach'd to the Suggestions of the Wicked, you will continue in Wickedness; or to express it in the Words of Holy DAVID, *with the Perverse you will be perverted.* Fly then to the *Holy of Holies* in the Blessed Sacrament of the Eucharist. *With the Holy you will be made Holy*, says the PSALMIST. Accept the Invitation he makes you from the Sacred Tabernacle, where he is waiting with Eagerness to relieve you. *Come, Come to me*, says he, *all ye who Labour and are heavy laden and I will refresh you.* And whether else will you, can you go for Relief, O distemper'd Souls, but to this Sovereign Divine Physician? Who shall release you from the merciless Yoke of spiritual Tyranny you groan under,

under, but He? In the sacred Tribunal of Confession you may hope to receive your Freedom from Sin and Satan; but whether will you run but to this Source of Grace for an Augmentation of that which you will there receive? Whether will you travel to find the Grace necessary to conquer your bad Habits, to resist the future Suggestions of Hell, to despise the empty Enticements of an enslaving World, and to quell the frequent Revolts of your rebellious Passions? Whether I say, will you steer in search of those Virtues you are now a Stranger to, but to this Fountain of all Grace, to this Author of all Virtues? And how shall you hope to obtain them from him but by a frequent intimate Union with him, in that Holy Sacrament he so lovingly invites You to? If you receive him frequently, how intimate will you grow with him! *He who eats me*, says Christ, *the Same shall live by me*. Your Life then will be no more the Life of a sinful Man, but the Life of Christ. No more will you be subject to the Temptations of the Devil, but superior to them: No more will you be allured by a flattering World, but be void of Taste for it's Vanities: No more will you be enslaved by your lawless Passions, but Proof against their Suggestions. In a word, the more often you receive Christ, the more eager will

will you grow to receive again; till transform'd into him, you will think with St. PAUL. *I live, yet not I, but Christ lives in me.* Such is the Importance and such are the great Advantages, which every Christian must reap from a frequent Devout Reception of Christ, in the Holy Sacrament of his Body and Blood.

And are not these sufficient Motives to induce you, to receive him often, and to receive him worthily? Must I be forced, Christians, to place before You that eternal Crown of Bliss which will be the Reward of such as by a frequent worthy Reception of him, have perpetuated their intimate Union with him in this Life? And will that even be too faint to excite your Reverence? Well then, if you are of so servile a Nature that Nothing will deter you from abusing his Goodness, but the Fear of his Punishments; hear what St. Paul says: *He who eats this Bread and drinks this Cup unworthily, eats and drinks Judgment to himself, not discerning the Body of our Lord.* Let no one dare then to approach to this Holy Sacrament, without disposing himself in the best Manner to receive it worthily: Since nothing less than the eternal Severity of God's Judgment, will be the infallible Consequence of an unworthy Reception of it.

But

But eternal Misery, perhaps is not enough to affright you, 'tis future, and you imagin far off. But hold, Christians, hold. It may not be so far off as you vainly imagin: It may be at hand; and you, if you should deserve it, will not be the first Instances of God's Divine Justice in this Life, should he take you off in the very Act of receiving unworthily. How many strange Distempers rage among Men, which Physicians know not the Cause of? How many die suddenly, and others of Sicknesſes which All are at a loſs to account for? But how many, alas, of theſe undiscover'd Diſeaſes, how many of theſe untimely Deaths will be accounted for in the Day of Judgment, from the Sacrileges committed in the Reception of this Holy Sacrament. This is no Invention of my own, St. *Paul* himſelf enumerates theſe very Particulars to the *Corinthians* to deter ſome among them from ſacrilegious Communion, whom neither the Infinity of God's Goodneſs could win to receive him worthily, nor the Eternity of his Severities could deter from receiving him unprepared. *Therefore are there among you, ſays he, many weak and feeble, and many ſleep, that is the ſleep of Death.*

Ah! Christians! Be ſerious and reflect how much it behoves you to ſummon all your Attention, all your Diligence to receive
this

this Divine Nutriment worthily; *that is*, as worthily as a human Creature can do. To do this prepare yourself by an humble Confession, and sincere Contrition at Heart for all the Sins you have committed. Place yourselves in as perfect a State of Purity as You can. And cleanse your Hearts not only of Sin, but of every Affection to it. Consider the Greatness of the Guest who is to reside there, and think how unfit a Guest for him will be any little favorit Passion, any irregular Appetite, any unclean Affection. Sacrifice all then to him; and raise your Fervor by Acts of Virtue internal and external. In a word, study every time you approach to Communion, study to receive him with more Reverence and Devotion than ever you did before; empty your Soul intirely of all that is filthy and sinful and labour to fill it wholly with him. For to conclude with St. *Ambrose*: “ With how
 “ great a Contrition of Heart O Lord God;
 “ with what Floods of Tears; with what
 “ Fear and Reverence; with what Cha-
 “ stity of Body and Purity of Mind, ought
 “ we not to celebrate that Divine Mystery,
 “ where thy Body is indeed taken and thy
 “ Blood indeed drank; where the highest
 “ unites with the lowest; the Divine with
 “ the Human; where thy Angels are pre-
 “ sent, and Thou thyself ar’t wonderfully
 VOL. IV. B b “ and

“ and ineffably both Priest and Victim. Yet
 “ who, O Lord, can celebrate or partake
 “ of this sacred Mystery worthily, unless
 “ you give him so to do? Grant us then
 “ we implore that Grace we so little de-
 “ serve, yet stand so much in need of: ”
 That worthily partaking of thee here, we
 may be more intimately conjoin'd to thee
 in thy Glory hereafter. Which, &c. *In*
the Name, &c.



SERMON



S E R M O N

On the Last SUNDAY after

P E N T E C O S T.

St. MATTHEW xxiv. 20.

*Pray that your Flight be not in Winter or
on the Sabbath.*



IN the Gospel for this Day, Christians, your Divine Saviour is labouring to arm you against the Terrors of the last great and general Judgment, by describing to you the Danger of being unprepared for it's Approach. And that you may be in constant readiness to receive *him* as your Welcome Judge, who was so ready to exhibit himself your Friend and Advocate; he warns you of the moral Impossibility of preparing yourselves in the Instant of his coming, on the Account of the dreadful

B b 2 Consternation

Consternation you will necessarily be in at the Majesty of his Appearance, as well as at the Suddenness of it. *For as Lightning cometh out of the East and appeareth even to the West, so also shall the coming of the Son of Man be.* But for a clearer Comprehension of this let me appeal to the last Fears you were in when Lightning rous'd your sleeping Consciencies. However they perhaps are all forgotten, and your Resolves are vanish'd all to Nought with the evaporated Cause which gave them Birth. Come then, dear Lord, once more before thy last Appearance send forth this terror-striking Harbinger of thy Approach, to wake these drowsy People. O'erspread the Heavens with sudden Clouds and let each Meteor strike Fire, 'till Flame embracing Flame, the Hemisphere shall flash with one broad blaze of Lightning. Ah! Christians, You want the Heart to join me in this Prayer, that Bravery with which you dare your distant Judge, already fails you; and could one but inspect your Souls, you shudder at the very Thought. How then would you quake, if while I am speaking a sudden Sheet of livid Light should overspread the Sky in fact! And whence proceeds this Panic which makes it's way even to the most intrepid Breasts? Whence comes it that the bravest Mortals, who like unshaken Rocks can

can face immoveable the fiery Mouths of Cannons, and wade through rapid Floods to fight and challenge Death amidst the Flames, shall often shrink with Horror at a sudden Lightning in the Air? The Reason's plain, the former finds them on their Guard, and arm'd with Bravery and Caution. The latter takes them unawares, e'er they have time to summon Resolution, or to recur to means of Safety. 'Tis then the Suddenness of Lightning which Surprises: And 'tis the Subtilness which makes our Horror reasonable, inasmuch as it baffles all Precaution, and carries it's baleful Power to the deepest, closest, most remote Recesses we can fly to. For the same Reason then as makes you dread the very Thought of Lightning, You ought to live in a perpetual Fear of the tremendous last Approach of your Almighty Judge, and such a Fear as may by keeping in constant readiness, lessen your Fears, if not dispell them quite, when he shall actually appear. *For so shall also the coming of the Son of Man be: Sudden as Lightning.* As Lightning subtil and penetrating from the Surface to the Center of the Earth his Power and Majesty will leave you no Recess, no dark retreat to lurk in from his all-reaching Presence. Then if You should be unprepared, you'll have no time to get yourself in readiness, when
if

if unhappily without the Coat of Justifying Grace, 'twill be dreadful to go forward, and ah, too late to go back to Repentance in search of it. *Pray*, then says your Saviour, *that your Flight be not in Winter or on the Sabbath*. That is fly from the Wrath to come while it is Summer, while it is a time of working: While you have Youth, or Vigour, or the means of Grace in reach. For should you perversely put it off till the Winter of Old Age, of Sicknefs, or to that Period, when strengthen'd in Virtue you ought to hope for rest from all your Labours; alas your flight will be in vain. But this perhaps affects you little; you feel Life strong in you, and cannot be persuaded that the Summer of your Health is near an End. Well then to gratify your favorite Weakness, I'll suppose you have some Secret sure against a Morrow's Fever, or this-day's Apoplexy. But can You give me any Assurances that You and I are not the miserable Mortals destin'd in bloom of Health, to *see the Son of Man coming in the Clouds of Heaven with much Power and Majesty*? Who e'er the unhappy Creatures be, doom'd to be Witnesses to that dread Sight, they will expect it as little as You do: And yet perhaps none will have greater Reason to expect it than You have; if any Attention be paid to the portentous Signs which Christ assures

assures you shall preceed it. Should this then be your Case, what a hard Winter will that be for you to travel in to meet your Judge. If you neglect to labour in the little Summer left you, how will you labour in that *Sabbath* when all Works shall cease? How will you take your flight from Danger in a Season, when Horrors facing you on every side You turn, shall throw you into such a Consternation as shall rob you of all means of Safety and make it equally discouraging to halt or to advance. Ah! Pray then Christians, *pray that your flight from Evil be not in the Winter, or on the Sabbath.* And that I may induce You to make this Prayer effectual, by watching constantly, while you enjoy the little Summer of Health and means of Grace left you, against the Horrors of that wretched Winter, now I shall shew you,

I. That it is not only not impossible but even highly probable, that Many here may live to be the sad Spectators of it: *And*

II. Whether it be so or not, it highly behoves you all to stand in readiness for it.

“ O thou eternal Judge, who graciously
 “ has’t warn’d us of thy second coming
 “ give us the Grace to reap the Benefit
 “ which

“ which thou intendest us by thy all-merciful Precaution, that ever ready to go forth to meet thee, our solid Hopes in thy unfailing Promises may dissipate the Terrors of that Period when it comes. ”

I. That None of those Creatures, who are reserved to be living Spectator's of the second coming of Christ, may plead their Consternation at the Suddenness of it as an Excuse for their want of Preparation; our Divine Saviour, while yet a Saviour, has left them sufficient Marks of his future Approach. Indeed in the very Chapter, whence this Gospel is extracted, he tells you all, that *of the day and hour, when this shall come to pass, No body knoweth, neither the Angels of Heaven.* Watch therefore, says he, *because you know not what Hour your Lord will come.* Nay continues our Divine Master, *be always ready, because at what Hour you think not, at that very Hour, the Son of Man will come.* And yet sudden and unexpected as that Hour will be, when it does come; it will not be so sudden, but that it may be foreseen to be near at hand for many Years, by the Signs and Wonders preceeding it. And what are these Signs and Wonders; what are the previous Harbingers of it's Approach? Why our blessed Lord tells us of two Sorts and those very remarkable

remarkable Ones. The One Sort are the Abuses of Grace, the other the Distortions of Nature: The *First* the Works of the Devil, and the *Second* the Warnings of an exasperated God. The *Former* are many Years antecedent to the General Judgment and the last immediately preceeding it. Now which ever we consider we shall find, that, keeping in our Eye the Prediction of our Saviour, we have the greatest Reason to apprehend, that the Day of Universal Judgment is near enough at Hand for us to expect it, even in our own Days.

The first of these Signs then as we have it from our Saviour Christ is, that *there shall rise false Christs and false Prophets and shall shew great Signs and Wonders, so that the Elect also (if it be possible) may be induced into Error.* And when alas can this Prediction be nearer to it's Accomplishment than it appears at present. Within these two last Centuries how many impudent, absurd and detestable Heresies have not raised their Heads! How many false Christs have appear'd, Wretches so void of Sense and Honesty, as for the Sake of gratifying their Love of Lucre, their Lust of Praise, or leud Libertinism have rent the Church of God, bid Christ defiance, and vented new conceited Gospels of their own instead of his, and what is still more gla-

ringly audacious, made use of his revered Authority to give their Errors Sanction! What shall we say of *Luther's* Followers, Fools who presume to shelter their Absurdities under the awful Wing of Christ's unerring Truths, tho' such Absurdities as even their Wicked Master blushes not to own that he received in a nocturnal Conference from *Satan* the Father of Lies? Are they not manifest false Prophets? What Signs and Wonders have they not feign'd *to draw (if possible) even the Elect to Error?* For what a Wonder is it not, far more surprising to sound Reason than any Mystery of our Faith, that Men who pride in owning Christ to be eternal Truth, and Men of no mean Genius, nay Multitudes of Men like these, should blindly yield to contradict his most express Commands and Doctrins to follow those of an obscure, debauch'd, and stupid Outlaw; who has recorded himself the Profelyte of Hell, and voluntary Dupe to the known Father of Lies the Devil. This is a Wonder of such a Nature as, if consider'd with superficial Eyes, might startle (if possible) even the Elect. What shall so many Men of Parts and Learning, some poor illeterate Innocents would say, what shall such Men give into this new Doctrin, and it be false? Sure nothing but a Miracle could give so speedy

speedy an Encrease to such minute Beginnings. In truth to eye it but on this Side; who would not yield to be a *Lutheran*? But search this Wonder to the Bottom and you shall see how false a Sign it is. To what is owing the surprising Progress of this lying Sect of feigning Prophets? The Church of Christ owed it's Encrease to the minuteness of its Origin: But in what did that Minuteness consist? It consisted as I have already shewn you in Humility, Self-denial, and the Cross of Christ: Principles all opposit to, and destructive of the Maxims of the Flesh. That from such Principles then, this Church should gather Strength and draw Mankind to even renounce the Flesh to become Members of it, must be a Miracle indeed, because superior to the Force of Nature. But were the Seeds of *Lutheranism* such? No they were the Gratification of the Flesh and Appetites, and quite conformable to the Propensity of Man's corrupted Nature, where then is the Wonder that they should find Abettors?

Luther himself began his Heresy by private Marriage, tho' a Priest, and *Carlostadius* improving on his Master was the first Priest who dared to shelter this Sacrilege under that of public Nuptials. But still they restrain'd some irksome Bounds to

Vice which Nature could not brook, and these their wiser Disciples *Zuinglius* and his Companions help'd to remove by taking off the Real Presence. *Calvin* still wiser than they all, gave the last Stroke to Virtue by his Sin-soothing, and Flesh-inflaming Blasphemies of Grace inamissable. What Wonder then that these should gain such credit in the World! What Wonder that from these tainted Sources of Corruption such Numbers of Heresies and Heresiarchs should spring within the Space of two hundred Years as would, if number'd, exceed all those, which sprung and died in fifteen hundred Years before! The Wonder only is, that they should dare to call even Christ himself, the eternal Truth of God to witness to their Falshoods. But if they did not this, they would not be false Christs, false Prophets, such as Christ has warn'd You of. 'Tis by this Sign you know them to be Such: And now if you permit them to deceive you, it is your Fault, not Christ's who has sufficiently instructed you to guard against them.

When you see the Abomination of Desolation standing in the Holy Place, says Christ, he that readeth let him understand: Then they who are in Jury let them flee to the Mountains. St. Jerom upon this Text warns us to take Notice that there is a figurative

rative Sense in this Passage. For says the Saint, " When our Saviour calls upon our
 " Understanding to exert itself, 'tis a
 " Sign that he is delivering some mystical
 " Doctrin to us. " And to explain the
 mystical Sense of this to us, the venerable
 Father tells us, " By the Abomination of
 " Desolation is to be understood every per-
 " verse Doctrin, which when we perceive
 " creeping into and rearing it's Head in
 " the Church, we ought to flee from
 " *Judea* that is from the *Jewish* or *Here-*
 " *tical* Perversity of it to the Holy Moun-
 " tains of God's eternal Truth, by which
 " he illuminates wonderfully all who have
 " Recourse to it, under the Roof of his
 " Infallible Church. "

The Abomination of Desolation then which
 these infernal Sects have wrought in the
 very Sanctuary of Christ, you yourselves,
 Christians, are melancholly Witnesses to:
 You see them standing in the Holy Place.
 Are not the Words of St. *Hypolitus*, quoted
 by the *Romish* Editors, strictly verified in
 your own Days? " The Sacred Houses of
 " Churches shall be like to Cottages, and
 " the precious Body and Blood of Christ
 " shall not be extant (openly in Churches)
 " the Liturgy (or Mass) shall be extin-
 " guish'd, the Psalmody shall cease, and the
 " reciting of Scriptures shall not be heard? "

Have

Have not some of these false Prophets and Christs engross'd and usurp'd all the Sacred Temples of God, to pollute them with their own Abominations, have not others laid desolate the Altars of the Lord and have you any place to celebrate the Mysteries of his awful Majesty, but Garrets and Cellars and Stables and Cottages?

Is there not great Reason to think then that the Judgment of God is at Hand? Ah be serious therefore, Beloved, and provide for your Security during the little Summer, the little time for Struggle which is left you. You who are yet in *Judea*, in the State of Sin and Perversity, flee to the Mountains of Christ's Holy Faith and Doctrins and pray that the *Winter* the *Sabbath* overtake you not, before you have finish'd your Christian Race and Labour. Let such among you as are reduced to serve your God on the House-top, take care not to lose the Ground you have gain'd by descending to the Conversation of these false Christ's, by entering to commerce with them and taking any thing from your former dwelling of Sin or Error. He who is in the Field of God's Church, let him not go out of it to take on his Coat of fleshly Inclinations. No: Look forward and suffer not yourselves to be decoy'd out of your Salvation by those lying Prophets, nor any of their spurious Offspring.

Thanks

Thanks to the Divine Mercy, great as the Tribulation is, which those false Christ's have afflicted the Church of the true Christ with, according to his own Prediction in this Gospel: *A Tribulation*, says your Lord, *such as has not been from the Beginning of the World until now neither shall be any more*; yet has God for the Sake of the truly Faithful sown such Confusion among them, as renders the reign of them all like that of a Mushroom, the Birth of a foggy Morning, and the Blight of an Evening-Mist. Tho' like Locusts they spread at their Rise, yet like Caterpillars they moulder to Nothing before the Sun-shine of Catholic Faith. And indeed, as the eternal Truth itself has told us, *unless the days of their flourishing, had been shorten'd, no Flesh should be saved: But for the Elect the days shall be shorten'd*. This you have seen in all the Sects which hitherto have sprung up. The Spirit of Discord has divided them; and from the enormous Bulk they swell'd to, the loose luxuriant Branches shooting from them have wasted them, till they are sunk to Nothing, almost Nothing. What are the Sects of *Luther* or of *Calvin* now, if we survey them in the Trunk, but a mere stump of rotten Fuel. And all the little Shew of Existence they preserve is in the withering Branches they produced
of

of Independents, Quakers, Anabaptists, and other Antic Names unknown to Christ and to his Sacred Gospel.

What tho' from the Dregs of a mere Shadow of a Church we see, even in our Days, spring forth the giddy empty and luxuriant Puff of Methodism, yet shall that too e'er it belong wither before the Face of Truth, and share the Fate of all preceeding Errors. If any Man of these shall tell you then, Beloved, *Lo here is Christ or there*, believe him not. They are false Christs, false Prophets all, whatever Signs or Wonders they may affect to shew. With all their outside Piety, their inward Principles are Rottenness and will not stand the search of Truth. Why do they cry up Faith in Christ but to decry the saving Works which he has taught us by Word and by Example? Why do they fly to Fields and Desert Places but to decoy the Elect from riteful Worship in God's Church. Why do they like preceeding Hereticks scoff at all Church-Authority, themselves still claiming that Authority for Sanction; why but to evade the Power She has from Christ of bringing them to order and dissipating their Absurdities, with her unerring Truths?

Stand then, Beloved Christians, stand faithfully upon your Guard nor suffer their delusive Wiles to ensnare you into Error.
They

They are false Christs, false Prophets all. Take the Precaution which your Saviour gives you. *If they shall say to you, behold Christ is in the Desert; go ye not out.* Leave not the salutary Pale of his pure Church to follow them, nor suffer Curiosity or Love of Novelty to decoy you from your present Safety, to listen to their Passion-soothing Speeches. For *he who loves Danger shall perish in it,* says the Holy Ghost.

For the same Reason if any Man shall tell you *behold him in Closets, believe it not.* Such are those Wretches, too fatally known by the Name of Jansenists, who basely lurk beneath the Grass to spread their venom wider and strike the Sting of their pernicious Doctrins more deeply in the Breast of the Unguarded. Wretches by far more dangerous than the worst of open Heretics, as they elude the Power of Truth, by skulking in the Dark, why do these Monsters blaspheme the Grace they are Strangers to, by carrying it to the Destruction of Free-will, but to depress all Merit, discourage Virtue and introduce the Abomination of Desolation, which they practice in their private Conventicles, into the Holy Place of God's pure Church. If they had Truth at Heart, and if their Doctrin was sound enough to bear the Test of her Examination, why should they labour with such

subtil Art to elude the Power of Censure. By debiting their pestilential Sentiments to the unwary under the Ties of Secrecy. That Heretic is in some Measure honest who dares to utter his Belief in open day. But let them be Priests or what they will, they surely are false Christs and lying Prophets, who utter any Doctrins under Tye of Privacy which they dare not publicly confirm in Word, in Writing, or in Print. And if they dare, what Reason can they shew for so much Caution? Beware of such then, Christians. Jansenist or seeming Catholic, Priest or Lay-man whate'er he be who dares to debit to you any Doctrin under Tye or Air of Secrecy, suspect him for a false Christ, a lying Prophet and shun all Commerce with him, as you would with Serpents. For such a One, tho' cloath'd in outside Piety like a second Abbot *Paris*, nay tho' he should shew great Signs and Wonders, yet is he fit only to induce the very Elect (if possible) into Error. Take then the timely warning Christ has given you: Flee from their Conversation, flee from the Danger which they threaten you with, and flee by times before the *Winter* or *Sabbath* overtake you and prevent your Flight. For what less can you conclude from the abundance of false Christs and Prophets, who in these latter times have spread

spread their Abominations in the very Sanctuary of Christ's Flock, but that it is not only possible but highly probable that many of us, who are Witnesses to the Desolation they have wrought, are doom'd to be Spectators of the Terrors they are Forerunners of.

However if this previous Omen be not sufficient to persuade You that those Terrors are so near, let us cast a passing Eye on the Signs which shall immediately preceed them. Those I have hitherto been speaking of are as you see Abuses of Grace, the Works of the Devil and antecedent to the dreadful Period for many Years; but these I am now to speak of are the Convulsions of distorted Nature, the Warnings of an exasperated God and the immediate Prelude of his last and awful Coming. *Immediately after the Tribulation of those Days the Sun shall be darken'd and the Moon shall not give her Light, and the Stars shall fall from Heaven, and the Powers of Heaven shall be moved.* And who that has but lived to Man's Estate, who may not vouch the Accomplishment of this? How many total Eclipses have we not seen of Sun and Moon, within a few Years past, more than were ever known before within so short a time, and One by all avouch'd the greatest since the Death of Christ? How many Comets,

in our time, have almost jointly warm'd and terrified our Hemisphere; which different Course has kept them wide of Each-other for many hundred Years! If we have seen no falling Stars, how many flaming Meteors have burst about our Ears? What are our modern Northern Lights, unknown of before the Birth of some young People here? To what shall we ascribe the Removal of great Mountains, which, if there is any Credit to be given to the general Assent of public Rumour has happen'd more then once in our Days? Whatever flattering Reasons we may borrow from the Sciences to reconcile these odd Appearances of Nature, they are all too weak to pay us with Conviction. In vain we strive to account for that Alteration of the Seasons, which Everyone who can but recollect the Facts of twenty Years ago is witness to, and knows and feels; a Change so great and so portentous that many Men of no small Parts and Learning have not been ashamed to think aloud that the whole Universe must have received a Shock. This Tenet however absurd it may appear, we know is not impossible since Christ here tells us that the very *Heavens shall be moved*. Why may it not be now then as well as any time hereafter? And what can be more probably than this the Cause of such a Change in
Nature

Nature as we all are Witnesses to? Nay we cannot well doubt of it if we compare these with the other Signs I have already mention'd. *Many, says Christ, shall come in my Name, saying I am Christ.* This you have seen in a *Luther, a Calvin, a White-field, a Trap* and other lying Prophets who set themselves up for so many Christs in fact, by treading down the Gospel of the true Christ, to set up another of their own in barefaced Opposition to it.

And what if to swell the Argument I bring those other Prodigies which Christ has left us? *You shall hear Wars and Rumours of Wars, says he. For Nation shall rise against Nation and Kingdom against Kingdom, and there shall be Pestilences and Famines and Earth-quakes in Places.* Has not the habitable World been fill'd these many Years with Wars and then with Rumours of them. How long has *Asia and Africa* been bleeding beneath the Weight of foreign Wars and civil Broils. Is not *Nation* risen against *Nation*, even in the Heart of *Europe, and Kingdom against Kingdom*, carrying the rude Effects of Discord to the other Extremity of the World. How many Places at this very time are half depopulated by the Rage of Pestilences? When were there ever known more frequent Earthquakes than our Age can number?

And

And if we may believe the daily Outcries of the Poor of other Nations, or our own, lean Famine has been shewing at a Distance her meagre rueful Face in many Parts of *Europe*, almost at one time, and only seems to hover in Suspence, where to begin the Execution of God's angry Justice.

If then we join all these great Signs together, and compare them with the Caution Christ has given us, what can we do less than conclude that the Judgment of God is at Hand and probably nigh enough for Some of Us present to be living Witnesses to.

Ah! Christians, if You were sure that this would be your Case how would you not endeavour to prepare yourselves for the Approach of that tremendous Period! Ought you not then to use the same Endeavours since you have no Certainty that it will not be so? But whether it be so or not this you are sure of that you must rise to meet the Terrors of it, and therefore it highly behoves You to stand in readiness for it, as much as those Unhappy Mortals who are reserved to struggle with those Terrors in their Mortal Flesh. Your present Preparation for the coming of your Lord, will not advance your Fears one Minute nearer, but they will help to Guard you from the Evils which you'll Fear, by moving at a Distance
from

from you the wretched Causes of them, Sin and Error. Your putting off your Preparation will not put off the Evil day, for but one single Moment. But if you wisely use the Summer of the present time, the happy Opportunity and Means which now are given you of working your Salvation, then shall the Winter of the World have no Evils for you, Your present Works shall follow you and help you to go through it with Peace and Safety, and that dread *Sabbath* which shall put an End to time, on which all farther Labours will be vain, will be too late, shall prove a day of Rest to you.

Be wise then, Christians: *Pray that your Flight be not in Winter or on the Sabbath.* And that your Prayers may prove effectual, add Watching to your Prayers. Stand on your Guard against the Approach of Sin and Error that you may be in constant Readiness for this Second Coming of your Lord, which may so probably be brought to pass in your own time of Life. *For when you shall see these things, says Christ, know ye that it is nigh even at the Doors.* And if it should be too remote for you to see in the Flesh, yet if You are prepared for this great Scrutiny you will be equally in Readiness for that particular Judgment, which Every-one must pass who dies before it.

One

One Preparation then will serve for either and will secure you from the dreadful Evils, which both may be attended with to slothful Christians. O thou great awful Judge, who hitherto has't proved a tender Saviour to us, vouchsafe to be our Saviour still, exert thy efficacious Grace in our Behalfe and rouse us from the Lethargy of spiritual Sloth; cloath us with Faith and Charity, and keep us in perpetual Readiness for thy Approach, that when thou comest All-bright and Glorious to put a Period to this World of Strife, strengthen'd with solid Hope and cloath'd with Fortitude, we may run forth with Joy to meet Thee and lose the Terrors of an awful Judge in the Majestic Countenance of Thee our still All-gracious JESUS. Which, &c. *In the Name, &c.*



ETERNAL MISERY

The necessary Consequence of

INFINIT MERCY abused.

A

SERMON

Proving the PROPER ETERNITY

OF THE

TORMENTS of HELL.

Printed for the first time separately in the Year MDCC XL (with a PREFACE prefix'd to it, which was occasion'd by an extraordinary Piece of the celebrated Mr. WILLIAM WHISTON, M. A. Divine of the Church of *England*, publish'd while This Sermon was actually in the Press, and some few Days before it's first Publication.)

Now again Printed a THIRD TIME and here annex'd, together with the above-mention'd PREFACE.

L O N D O N :

Printed in the YEAR 1745.

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THE P R E F A C E.



THE following Sermon was intirely finish'd and actually in the Press, as it now stands, some days before the coming out of Mr. *Whiston's* odd Medley of Quotations. Nevertheless, if I had found any thing, in that extraordinary Piece, worthy a special attention; I wou'd have been at the pains of inserting it in the body of my Discourse. But, upon the nicest perusal, I have been able to pick nothing out of it, which could deserve such a compliment. The Texts are so jumbled, and often so foreign; the Remarks so trivial, and little to the purpose; and the Whole is so puff'd with affectation of Learning, and yet so very empty of the reality; that I should not think it worth the least notice, but for that regard I owe, and shall always be careful to pay, to the Public in general.

Had this Gentleman been as sincerely fond of Truth, and as much in earnest about clearing up the important Doctrin concerning the *eternal Duration*

ration of future Punishments, as he pretends to be; he would have search'd to the bottom, and not been content to play, and loiter about the surface of it, without once attempting to go any deeper. To place this matter in a full obvious and decisive light, he should have consider'd the divine principles on which it is essentially built, as *infini Mercy, infinit Justice, immutable Truth*, and their *inseparable relations* to one another in GOD; the *Covenant* which the ALMIGHTY graciously enter'd into with his *Creature*, and the *Means Free-will and Grace*, he afforded the *Creature* to fulfil that *Covenant*; the *infini beinousness insolence and obstinacy* of the *Creature* in breaking it, offending *infini Justice*, and rejecting *infini Mercy*; the *infini Satisfaction* due to *infini Offences*, as compared with the *limited nature of the Offender*, &c. All these are Points, on the consideration of which essentially depends the decision of the Doctrin in question; and the want of weighing which with all the deliberation that is necessary has caused some letter-lull'd Divines to split upon the rock of error in the very noon-light of evidence.

But then to take so many profound subjects into consideration, and to talk of them coherently, is a laborious task, requires a good deal of Study, some real Learning, and no small knowledge of Divinity. It is more easy, sooner done, and makes a much greater shew of Learning, in the Eyes of the illiterate Vulgar, to huddle together, by the help of a Concordance,
however

however confusedly, an ill-pick'd heap of incongruous Texts, and wire-draw them to the End proposed, by these unanswerable arguments: ----- *perhaps* ----- *it seems* ----- *I imagine* ----- *I suppose* ----- *I believe* ----- *I fancy* ----- *I ascribe* ----- *I take it* ----- and such like conjectural Demonstrations. And that is the very Method the voluminous Mr. *Whiston* has thought the most proper to make use of, throughout his Treatise against the proper *Eternity* of the *future Punishments* of the *Wicked*. He has, it must be own'd, been lavish enough of Scripture; but what method has he observed in quoting it? Why truly, none at all. He has given us some Texts, proving the *Eternity* of God's *Mercy*, which no Believer in God can dispute; and these he has wrested to prove that the *future Punishments* of the *Wicked* cannot be *eternal*. Others he has brought, which assert *that Eternity* in as express terms as can be made use of; and these he impotently labours to quibble away with an idle chicanery on the import of the words in *Greek*, of which he has given us a few instances; and one in *Hebrew*, which he has had the modesty to give us in Italic characters. But the much greater part of the Texts, he has so liberally bestow'd upon us, he might as well have appropriated to a Treatise against the Blessed Trinity. However, he has made shift to tack them to the rest, and wrest them alike to his merciless purpose, by the help of such childish Remarks, and pueril Conjectures,

as would be inexcusable in any Man of Sense, who was not of his years.

To come to a perfect knowledge of Reveal'd Truths, it is, without doubt, absolutely necessary to recur to that sacred repository of Divine Revelations, the HOLY SCRIPTURES. But still to obtain any light from the sacred mysteries there enshrined, 'tis essentially necessary also, in reading them, to keep always in view the Divine Attributes of that eternal sovereign Truth who dictated them; and to eye those Attributes abstracted from all the imperfections which our groveling Conception is apt to vest them with. This is one means indispensably requisite towards a right understanding of Holy Writ, especially where Texts seem to contradict one another. And without this means, it will be totally impossible to reconcile any seemingly opposit terms of expression we there meet with: On the contrary, we must lie open to the most wretched inevitable confusion.

Indeed the laborious Gentleman above-mention'd, to make some amends for his deficiency in so material a point, has given us a slip-knotted string of Authors, some of credit and some of none, as a support to his odd conjectures, and has been absent enough to think them to his purpose. What is very singular, and quite in his own way, is the Method he has observed in doing this. Those venerable Fathers whose authority against him all his artifice could not elude, he has been pleased very modestly

modestly to pass over un-noticed, or to brand with the Title of Heretic; and such avow'd Heretics as chime with him in his errors, he has most generously promoted to the dignity of Fathers. By the authority of such as these he has apocryphised many Texts of authentic Scripture, and by his own undisputed authority, has swell'd the Sacred Code with apocryphal and even spurious Writings. Where an Author of venerable authority can, however forcibly, be distorted to serve a turn, he is mention'd with respect; and where he is too plain for the most barefaced confidence to pervert, or elude, we are told, he is corrupted by interpolations, and therefore not to be depended upon; or else that what he says is a *philosophic Romance*, or a *poetic Flight*, and consequently of little weight: And yet when occasion serves again, the philosophic Fables of a Heathen are to be the received plan of a Christian System; and *Homer* and *Virgil* are orthodox Divines.

But what is more curious still, is, that this Gentleman's fondness for the idol of his own brain, his new-fangled *æons*, *Hades*, has induced him to make use of those very passages in the ancient Roman-Catholick Writers, in which they are manifestly arguing for a Purgatory, as so many authorities for his chimerical intermediate State; tho' it is self-evident that the one System has nothing in common with the other. However, some authorities must be produced to countenance a fiction which otherwise cou'd
not

not be swallow'd by the grossest ignorance; and therefore all plunder is lawful prize to a man who is determin'd upon gaining his point at any rate; or appearing at least to do so, with such credulous Readers as take upon trust what they either have not leisure or want opportunity of examining farther into.

Another artifice this Author seems to triumph much in, is, a sophistic affectation of reasoning away the Doctrin in question, by the very Similes made use of in Scripture to explain it, such as that of the *Chaff*, *Matt. iii.* Whence he argues, p. 42. that as the Wicked are compared to the *Chaff*, which is entirely burnt up for it's destruction, it plainly implies that their Punishment shall be ended by an utter destruction, or *what we should call Annihilation.* But is not this egregious trifling? For besides that every Student in Philosophy knows that the *Chaff*, which is burnt up by fire, is not, strictly speaking, totally annihilated, but rather corrupted into a different substance: If Mr. *Whiston* mean'd to personate the Divine, the Philosopher, or the Man of Letters, he should have remember'd that for Parities, Comparisons, or Similes to be good and just, it is by no means material for them to run parallel in every circumstantial particular, but in such only as they are brought to express. Thus St. *John Baptist*, to give some express idea of the Torments destin'd for the Wicked, compares their persons to the *Chaff*: and as long as the parity gives the analogy between

tween both, with regard to their being the destin'd fuel of fire; it matters little whether there is any farther analogy in it, or not: The parity is strictly just in the particular it was used to express, and that is sufficient. But-----to conclude, because they are analogous with regard to the Circumstance of burning, that therefore they must be so too with regard to the Length of their Duration, is such reasoning as may be tolerated in a man while he is dreaming, but will by no means bear telling when he awakes. For a proof of this I shall content myself with bringing one instance out of *Esdra's*, as quoted by this Gentleman: *As the Heavens, says Esdras, are bigger than the Earth, so are his (God's) ways bigger than our ways.* Now would it not set this Gentleman o' yawning, should any man tell him with a grave face: "Lately, in my sleep, me-
 " thought, in reading the fourth of *Esdra's*, I
 " found out that the Distance between our Ways
 " and those of God is not absolutely infinit;
 " for that Distance is compared only to the
 " Space between Heaven and Earth, which can-
 " not possibly be infinit?" However Mr. *Whiston* might excuse the Dreamer, I fancy he would hardly, if perfectly awake himself, take such a dream for a rational argument. But I have dwelt longer on this subject than the weight of it deserves; and I should think myself blameable for so doing; if Reasonings, like these, did not make up most of the weightiest arguments in that Author's Animadversions.

The two main Pillars, however, on which he builds his whole sophistic machinery, are -----
First, that the Words עולם , *Olam*, in Hebrew, and Αἰών , *Aiôn*, in the Greek, do by no means signify a Co-eternity with God: *Second*, that St. JOHN, in the *Apocalypse*, calls the Damnation of the Wicked a *second Death*. But, on how quick-sanded a bottom these principles are grounded, will best appear from examining them separately.

First then ----- it is very true, that these words do not strictly import a Co-eternity with God, in any of his Creatures: For Co-eternity, in the true sense of the word, signifies a Duration equal with That of God, as well *a parte ante* or *anteriorly*, as *a parte post* or *for the future*: Which is probably the reason why no word is ever made use of, in the sacred Scripture, liable to such an interpretation, where Creatures are spoken of: And this may serve for an answer to his trivial remark, p. 97. as far as it relates to Hell-Torments. For as to his unpious Hint, with regard to the Antiquity of the Son of God, it is foreign to the present purpose to take any notice of it; especially as I design hereafter to treat that matter at large. It is nothing better then than a mere quibble of Mr. *Whiston's*, to pretend that the terms, *Olam* and *Aiôn*, were ever taken by any in a *co-eternal* sense. For such Divines and Fathers, as have made use of the word *co-eternal*, have applied it only in a limited improper sense, as signifying a Duration equal to
that

that of God, merely *a parte post*, or *posteriorly*. But this is too trite a remark among the truly learned, to need insisting on any farther.

It is equally true, that those words do sometimes mean no more than *an Age*, or sometimes a *limited*, or sometimes an *undetermin'd Duration*. But it is absolutely inconsistent with truth to say, that they never naturally and strictly signify an *endless, eternal, properly eternal Duration*, *a parte post*, or *for the future*, even when applied to Creatures,

The natural sense then of the above-mention'd words in dispute, is ----- the utmost Duration of the Persons or Things, they are spoken of, or appropriated to. Thus, when they are spoken of Things, in their nature, of a limited Duration; they signify nothing more, than that they shall *last* for as *durable an Age* as their perishable Existence will admit of: But when they are applied to God, or to such of his Creatures as are immortal in an essential part of their substance, they absolutely import an *endless Duration*. And that this Latter is the natural true import of the words in question, is evident from the very Etymion of the Greek *Αἰών*, *Aiôn*, which is *Aei*, *Aei*, SEMPER, *forever*; and the Root of the Hebrew *עלמ*, *Olam*, which is *עלמ*, *Elem*, and signifies ABSCONDITUM, INVESTIGABILE, *bidden or unsearchable*, and whence is form'd *עלמ*, *Olam*, SECULUM ÆTERNUM, an *endless Age*, or a Duration, as it were, hidden and unsearchable in it's Beginning, and

End: An elegance peculiar to the Hebrew Language.

Now to know for certain when the words עולם, *Olam*, and Αἰών, *Aiôn*, or their *Derivatives*, import an *eternal* Duration, or only a limited one; we are to examin into the Nature of the Beings they are applied to. If it be such as requires their Existence to cease; they must mean nothing more than an Age, or a *very lasting Duration*: But if it is essentially indefectible, as that of the Divine Being is *PER SE*, *of itself*, and all Intellectual Beings are *PER IPSUM*, *by him*; then they must naturally imply an endless, eternal, *properly eternal* Existence. Thus where they are applied to the ceremonial Laws of the *Jews*; it is evident, they can mean nothing more than that those Laws should have existence till the coming of Christ, and no longer: At which time they were essentially to cease, and give way to the more glorious Dispensation of the Law of Grace. So when spoken of the Servitude of *Gentil* Inhabitants among the *Jews*; they can signify only a continual Bondage during their natural life. But when they are made use of to signify the Duration of God's Divine Attributes, or the Existence of his intellectual Creatures in a future State; they must signify an *eternal*, *properly eternal* Lastingness: Both being equally immortal and indefectible by nature, *à parte post*, or *futurely*; with this difference only, that the *ONE* is so *PER SE*, *of himself*, the Others *PER ALIUM*, *from another*.

And

And this Rule, if carefully attended to by *Hebrew* and *Greek* Readers of Holy Writ, will serve them as a sure and safe Key to find the true Sense of the above-mention'd words wherever they meet with them throughout the whole Sacred Code.

But to return to our Subject, that Mankind are *eternal* Beings, *properly eternal*, A PARTE POST, *that is*, with regard to their *future State*, but especially the Blessed (and why they are so) *David* tells us in Psalm cxii. כִּי לְעוֹלָם לֹא-מוֹט לִזְכֹּר עוֹלָם יְהוָה צְדִיק. Ὅτι εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα ὁ σαλευθήσεται, εἰς μνημόσυνον αἰωνίων ἔσται δίκαιος. QUIA NON COMMUEBITUR IN SECVLUM, IN MEMORIA ÆTERNA ERIT JUSTUS. *Because*, (says *David*) *he will not be moved* (or disturb'd) *in any Age*, therefore the *Just Man* shall be in *eternal memory*. So that the Blessed, at least, according to the royal Prophet, must be *eternal*; and that because he is immoveable and not to be disturb'd by Defection or Annihilation, which surely is the worst of disturbance. Nor is he only indefectible in a limited sense, but not to be moved *in any Age*, as the strict literal translation imports and must import. For there needs no great share of Philosophy to know that *Negatio est malignantis naturæ* is one of the first principles in logic. *A Negation is malignant in it's nature*, and destroys all, which it affects: And as the Negation here affects the whole Phrase, it must necessarily destroy not only all Commotion, or Disturbance, in the Just Man,

Man, but every Age, or Period, in which it can be supposed possible,

It is very worthy to be remark'd too, that the very same Terms לעולם, *Leolam*, and εἰς τοὺς αἰῶνα, *Eis ten aîna*, עולם, *Olam*, and αἰώνιον, *Aiônion*, which are equally used in this Text to signify both an *Age* and *Eternity* with regard to *created* Beings, are equally applied in innumerable places of the Holy Scripture to the Duration of the Divine Being. So that granting that the word συναϊδιος, *SYNAIDIOS*, be never used to signify the Duration of any *created* Being, what can this Gentleman infer to his purpose? It is self-evident, that the very terms above-mention'd, so often used in Scripture to express the *utmost* Duration of Creatures, are very commonly also used there to express the Duration of God's Attributes: Which would be highly derogatory to his infinit Greatness; were not the words naturally significative of an Eternity properly such. I shall content myself, for brevity's sake, with giving one instance in a kind, and then take leave of this piddling topic.

In the xxvth. of *Leviticus*, the Law for Bondsmen runs thus: וְהִתְנַחֲלֵתֶם אֹתָם לְבָנֵיכֶם, אחריכם לרשת אחוה לעולם, *Kai katameristês autas tois technois ûmôn meô' umas. k' êsonlai umôn katochimois eis ton aiôna. ET HÆREDITATE TRANSMITTETIS ILLOS AD POSTEROS ET POSSIDEBITIS IN ÆTERNUM (sive IN SE-CULUM.) And ye shall transfer them to your Children, and shall possess them forever, (or to an*

an Age.) Concerning the ineffable Attribute of God's immutable Truth, *David*, in Psalm cxvii. 2. says: יהוה ייחידו לעולם, Καὶ ἡ ἀληθεία τοῦ κυρίου μένει εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα. ET VERITAS JEHOVÆ (scilicet DOMINI) MANET IN ÆTERNUM (scilicet IN SECVLUM.) *And the Truth of the Lord remains forever (or to an Age.)* Surely an Age must here mean an Age of Eternity? But let us proceed. The same Royal Prophet in Psalm cxix. 98. uses again the same expression concerning the Divine Law: כי לעולם דת-ה' יי, ὅτι εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα ἐμὴ ἐστὶ. QUIA IN ÆTERNUM MIHI (vel MEUM) EST. *Because it is ever before me (or mine.)* In Psalm cxii. above quoted, we see he has appropriated the same terms to the duration of the *Blessed*. And *Jeremiab*, in his xxxiii. d. Chap. ver. ult. speaking of the Wicked, does the same. His words are remarkably expressive: ונתתי עליכם חרפה עולם וכלמות עולם, καὶ δώσω ἐφ' ὑμῖν ὀνειδισμὸν αἰῶνος, καὶ ἀτίμιαν αἰῶνιὸν ἣτις οὐκ ἐπιληθῆσεται. ET DABO SUPER VOS OPPROBRIUM SEMPTERNUM ET IGNOMINIAM ÆTERNAM QUÆ NUNQUAM OBLIVIONE DELEBITUR. *And I will bring upon you an everlasting Reproach, and an eternal Shame, which shall never be forgotten (or shall never be effaced by Oblivion.)* Must it not then be properly eternal?

I might bring innumerable other Texts of this sort; if I cared to be as prolix as the long-winded Mr. *Whiston*: But those I have already produced are sufficient to prove what I have advanced,

advanced, and to shew how wretchedly low, as well as idle and undoctinal, are the page-swelling Quibbles about mere words, with which that Gentleman has been pleased to bloat his last Production. But it is time to examin the *second* grand Pillar of support to his mighty Battery against the *proper Eternity* of Hell Torments.

I could hardly have expected that a Man, whose indefatigable Drudgery, in poring over the monuments of learned Antiquity, should, methinks, entitle him to some Thought; wou'd have been absent enough to reason so very unpertinently on so plain a Text: But it is no new thing for some men to be dazzled out of evidence by the too open light it appears in. What can be more plain, than that the Perdition of the Wicked is both a *second Death* and an *eternal* one? What is the *first Death* but a Separation of Soul from the Body, which, notwithstanding, is perfectly consistent, according to Mr. *Whiston's* own scheme, with the actual Existence of the Soul? So the *second Death* is a real Separation from GOD of both Body and Soul, which is likewise perfectly consistent with a farther Duration of this Being, even according to the same Gentleman's opinion and favourit Hypothesis. For Mr. *Whiston* don't himself pretend that the Wicked shall immediately be annihilated at the general Judgment, when this *second Death* is to be inflicted; but positively avows, that they shall be tormented for a considerable time after. So that having allow'd this *second Death*

Death to be consistent with a *Life* capable of suffering, and suffering grievously; it must be own'd an egregious forgetfulness in this Gentleman; in the same breath to wrest that *second Death* to an utter dissolution of *Soul and Body*, in the strictest sense, as he must mean: For otherwise he concludes nothing, and means nothing.

It is plain then that Mr. *Whiston*, without perceiving it, is forced to own, in the very act of denial, that the *second Death* is, strictly speaking, a *state of Life*. But then he denies it to be *eternal Life*, or to be in perpetual punishments. This opinion of his, he tells us, is more reasonable: But for Reasons he gives us none, and has none to give. That this *Life of punishment*, which the Gentleman himself, as I have observed, undesignedly acknowledgés to be consistent with the *second* more dreadful *Death*, is strictly such; we have it from our Saviour, who puts the Resurrection of the Wicked and of the Good from the *first Death*, upon the same footing, with regard to their being a Resurrection to *Existence*: But calls the one a Resurrection to *Life eternal*, the other to *Fire eternal*. St. PAUL is very clear upon this head, and positively tells us, that in the great Day the *Dead shall be raised incorruptible*. Nay ---- he positively says, that our *Corruption must put on Incorruption*, and our *Mortal must put on Immortality*. So that, on one hand, the Condemnation of the Wicked plainly appears to be what St. *John* calls it, a *second Death*, inasmuch as it is an absolute Separation from the

only true Life, from the Presence of God, and the Glory of his power: And, on the other hand, the Incorruptibility, Immortality, and Indefeetibility of their Nature, will make that Separation a *natural State of Life in perpetual Misery*. Which may well indeed be call'd *Death* (and is the worst of *Deaths*) in opposition to that *eternal life*, that only Life worth contending for, which he *who overcome* shall be crown'd with; and which shall be a perpetual guarantee to him from any *second Death*, or Separation from God.

I shall take no notice of the many Self-contradictions, and gross Absurdities, which have so largely contributed to the bulk of the Piece before me, such as in p. 47, 53, 62, 63, and particularly in p. 64, where he most inimitably finds out, that no such Being as we are shall be strictly *co-eternal* with God *a parte post*, or *futurely*; and yet that the praises of God shall be sung by the Righteous for *indefeetible endless Ages of Ages*. and p. 72, 81. and those extravagant ones, p. 85, 98, onward, p. 104, and those p. 107, which last must certainly be owing to some weakness in that Gentleman's eyes, not suffering him to read any more of the Texts than the scraps he there quotes. Much less shall I make any remarks on the pretty Inconsistency of taking the *unquenchable fire*, and the *Worm which never dies*, in a literal Sense, in p. 109. and yet denying the Immortality of the Soul in p. 72. and the Equality of it's Duration *a parte post*,

post, or *posteriorly*, with God in p. 64. To set these, and many others in that Piece, in the truly ridiculous light they deserve, would be the task of a Volume rather than of a Preface. And as I shall hereafter, when leisure permits me, treat fully the sacred Doctrins relating to the Immortality of the Soul, and the Divinity of the Son of God, which the Gentleman so rashly blasphemes; I shall say nothing of the Latter here, nor any thing more concerning the Former: Especially since they are not absolutely pertinent to the present subject. Whatever else in that curious work may seem to the unletter'd part of my Readers to deserve solution, is already fully answer'd in the body of my Sermon.

It might be expected that I should quote those venerable Fathers and Writers of Antiquity whom Mr. *Whiston* had the modesty not to confute his own Work with; and, if it was necessary, I could do it. I could quote a St. AUGUSTIN, l. 21. *de Civitat. Dei*, c. 17. *Enchirid.* c. 112, & *contra Prist. & Orig.* ----- a St. GREGORY, l. 4. *Dialog.* & 9. *Moral.* ----- a St. ISIDORE *de summo bono.* ----- a St. CHRYSOSTOM, *Homil.* 24, 50. *in Mat.* ----- a St. HILARIUS, *in Psal.* 1. and many others. But besides that this would swell a confutation of him to a voluminous size, it would have no power to confound him. For I have no reason to expect, that these Fathers would fare any better with him than St. CLEMENT, LACTANTIUS, TERTULLIAN, St. CYPRIAN, and Others, whom

he has the inimitable courage to quote, and then to assure us, without being out of countenance, that they did not themselves believe a word of what they advanced: And this he demonstrates from a convincing argument, that he himself cannot believe they were in earnest. For it is observable, that there are no Divines or Fathers, so serious and sincere, so truly wise and learned, so very good and zealous for the safety of Souls, as this Gentleman, if you will take his own word for it. And this, perhaps, is one reason why he is so extremely fond of quoting himself.

Tho', if I may be ingenuous without offending; I will even own, that it is a shrew'd mark with me of a bad Scholar, as well as an indifferent Writer, when I find an Author railing against all who do not agree with him in Sentiments, for ignorant Fools; as it is of a bad Physician, a bad Divine, or a bad Man, to hear the One call the rest of the Faculty, Asses; the Other treat his Brethren like Blockheads; and the Third brand his Neighbours with the character of Knaves.

I do not mean to make any applications: And yet I can by no means conceal that this is a method very much made use of by that Gentleman. Whereas it would have been abundantly more satisfactory to his Readers, had he laid aside his Compliments to himself, and imputations of Ignorance to others; and instead of quibbling about Scripture, enter'd more deeply into the Subject he pretended to controvert. If
he

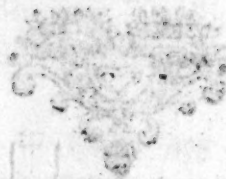
he is convinced of what he attempts to prove; why did he not afford us one argument of solidity, or at least the appearance of one, to convince us? But this, I dare boldly say, he has nowhere done throughout his whole very laborious Essay: Tho' I must at the same time do him the Justice to observe that his Neglect is not so much to be imputed to want of Will as to want of Power.

I shall now dismiss this Gentleman with the sincerest wishes a Christian can make, that he may not be brought to the fatal conviction of his present Error, with regard to the Subject in question, and be reduced to own it, to his sorrow, when too late.



He is convinced of what he attempts to prove; who did he not afford us one argument of this kind, or at least the appearance of one, to convince us? But this I dare boldly say, he has not done throughout his whole very laborious Essay: Tho' I must at the same time do him the Justice to observe that his Neglect is not so much to be imputed to want of Will as to want of Power.

I shall now divide this Gentleman with the himself with a Christian can insist that he may not be brought to the total destruction of his present Error, with regard to the subject in question, and be reduced to own it to his loss, when too late.





S E R M O N

ON THE
ETERNITY of the TORMENTS
of HELL.

PSALM LXII. 12.

Unto thee, O Lord, belongeth Mercy:

*For thou renderest to every Man
according to his Work.*



TO render to every Man according to his Work, is a very equitable thing: To pay a good Servant the Wages due to him for his Service, according to Covenant, is but right: And to punish an unfaithful Servant, in proportion to the breach of his part of the Covenant between him and his Master, is equally right. To insist upon payment of
the

the utmost Farthing due from an ill-principled Debtor, whom we have found to be able, but unwilling, to pay what he owes, is an act of Justice which no one can condemn: Especially if the Debtor himself is an inexorable Creditor to such of his unhappy Debtors as are wishful, but unable, to answer his demands.

So far then God is irreproachable in his conduct towards his Creatures, as, in consequence of his Covenant with them, he rewards with eternal Life the good; *that is*, those who love him and keep his commandments; *that is*, those who fulfil their part of the Covenant---*active Affection*, and *upright Action*. For tho', when they have done all, they may and must say, *they are but useless Servants*, with respect to him; yet in virtue of God's ineffable Promise they earn, merit, and, thro' his Grace, become intitled to, the stipulated Recompence of eternal Bliss; which God's *eternal Truth* lays him under a gracious, but indispensable, Obligation of conferring.

In like manner, when God punishes the WICKED, *that is*, those who do not keep his commandments, and consequently either do not love him, or love him only with a *lifeless, fruitless, inactive Affection*, and punishes them in proportion to the breach of their part of the Covenant he made with them (whether that proportion requires

quires the punishment to be eternal, or only temporal;) he is irreproachable in inflicting it. This is more especially self-evident with regard to that merciless Part of the Creation, who are inflexibly rigorous to their Fellow-creatures.

Tho' GOD could have created such a Being as Man, without laying him under any positive Restrictions; and in such case that Being could not have been guilty of any Punishment, but what he incurr'd by violation of the Laws of Nature founded on eternal Truth; yet as it was at GOD's disposal to lay what Restrictions he *pleased* on the Beings he was *pleased* to create, and as he actually did lay Restrictions upon them, with a Promise of Reward for their Compliance, and of Punishment for their Disobedience, every wilful Breach of that Covenant deserves a Punishment proportion'd to the Greatness or Littleness of such Breach: And GOD is strictly justifiable in inflicting it. Whence it appears, that GOD is equally just, as well in the Punishments he inflicts on the Wicked, as in the Re-compense he bestows on the Good: Both being the Wages due to their several Works, according to the Covenant made with them.

But where is the Mercy in either? Is a Man merciful in paying his Servants the Wages he bargain'd with them for; when once they have faithfully discharged their
D duty?

duty? No. They have a right to demand them? He is just to a nicety, but not merciful. When an honest Man compels by imprisonment a reluctant Debtor to pay the last Farthing of a debt he is able to discharge; can his Rigor be called Mercy? No. He is irreproachably just, but in no sense merciful. And yet in my Text the sacred Writer attributes *Mercy* to God, for this very reason: BECAUSE he renders to every Man according to his Work; that is, *Eternal Happiness* to the Good; *Eternal Misery* to the Wicked. *Unto thee, O Lord, belongeth Mercy: FOR thou renderest to every Man according to his Work.* That it is Justice in God to punish and punish severely the breaches of his Laws, we can easily comprehend; and that to afford the Transgressors any means of escaping the severity of his Justice, is Mercy, we can as easily conceive. But why should their Punishments be eternal? Or, if they are; how shall *eternal Rigor* be reconciled with *eternal Mercy*?

Why shall the Punishments of impenitent Sinners be *eternal*? Because a *false Ballance is abomination to the Lord: But a just Weight is his delight.* * --- How shall the *Eternity* of God's Justice inflict those *eternal* Punishments without prejudice to his infinit Mercy? In a most equitable manner: Inasmuch as *Mercy and Truth shall go*
(inseparably)

* Prov. xi.
1.

(inseparably) before thy face, * O Lord! * *Psalm.*
 --- God could not be just; if *Hell Torments*, *LXXXIX. 14.*
 the Punishments of the Wicked, were not
eternal: And These cannot be *eternal*; un-
 less God is as merciful as he is just in in-
 flicting them. This I shall undertake to
 set in a clear light, by separating Truth
 from it's Appearances, in the following
 Discourse, in which

I. I shall prove the Consistency of this
 Doctrin from Scripture; as well ac-
 cording to the Evidence of the Words,
 as to the Sense they are taken in by the
 Fathers,

II. I shall shew it's Conformity with
 Right Reason, from the Nature of the
Infini Offended, of the *finite Offender*,
 and of the *infini Satisfaction* due to
 the *Former* from the *Latter*.

III. I shall answer the most important
 Objections that can be offer'd against
 this Fundamental Point of Faith; and
 conclude the Whole with some moral
 Reflections.

“ O God of all Power Justice Truth
 “ and Mercy! O God, who did'st with
 “ such disinterested Generosity create us
 “ thy useless Servants to be forever infinitely
 “ happy with and in Thee; And who, to
 “ enable us to become in our own Right
 “ thus happy woud'st condescend to lift

“ us to the power of strictly meriting and
 “ earning the Wages of eternal Life, by
 “ graciously entering into an ineffable Cove-
 “ nant with us, which we had no origi-
 “ nal Claim to! Give us thy efficacious Aid
 “ to fulfill the Part which appertains to us:
 “ For Thou, we are sure, wil’t never fail
 “ to do all which depends on thee. We
 “ thank thee for the excess of Love with
 “ which thou invitest us to a Share of thy
 “ own Glory, by making it the Recom-
 “ pense of our otherwise unprofitable Ser-
 “ vices. We praise thee for being kindly
 “ pleased to bias us to deserve that glorious
 “ Recompense; by adding to thy boun-
 “ teous Invitations thy attracting co-oper-
 “ ating Grace, And more, we glorify thee
 “ for that, with farther kindness still, in
 “ order to encrease the powerful Bias, thou
 “ mercifully deignest to deter us from neg-
 “ lecting to secure the endless Bliss pre-
 “ paring for us; by allotting those endless
 “ Tortures, which must attend so senseless
 “ a Neglect. Oh then! since thou has’t
 “ done for us thus much; unweariedly
 “ continue to watch over us with thy Pa-
 “ ternal Eye. Enlighten our Minds and
 “ fortify our Hearts to make a wise, a faith-
 “ ful use of the Free-will and Grace thou
 “ has’t given us towards a prudent Choice:
 “ That we discreetly may prefer the desi-
 “ rable Justice of thy merciful Rewards
 “ in

“ in Heaven, to the dreadful Mercy of thy
“ equitable Punishments in the Abyfs of
“ Hell; and not urge thee to plunge us
“ into a Ruin, which must be *infinitely*
“ *miserable* and *eternally durable*, as, by the
“ Assistance of thy unalterable Truth, I
“ shall now make appear. Oh grant, Dear
“ Lord, it be with general Fruit!”



T is no ways material to my present Purpose to enquire, where the Place is in which the Wicked are and shall be tormented after Death, nor what are the Instruments of their Torment. Once we are sure that they must and will be tormented, it avails but little to know, whether the place of their punishment be in the Center of the Earth, as the Scripture in some Passages seems to express; or in the Air likewise, as from others may be gather'd: Whether the Instruments of their Torture be literally excess of Heat and Cold, unutterable Darkness, &c. and the Fire and Brimstone mention'd in Holy Writ, the same specifically with our Fire, and the Sulphur we are acquainted with; or whether it shall be of a more spiritualized nature. It is sufficient for us to know, that God, who created the World out of nothing, and governs the whole Creation with unlimited power, is capable of providing a proper Mansion of horror
for

for such Wretches as call upon his Justice for punishment; and that the Instruments he appoints to torment them with will effectually execute his Will. I shall leave therefore these less material Enquiries for another occasion, to attend wholly to this more important Question: "WHETHER GOD
 " WILL ETERNALLY PUNISH THE IM-
 " PENITENT WICKED? ---- AND WHE-
 " THER HE CAN BE MERCIFUL IN SO
 DOING?"

I. If we believe the Sacred Scripture, and adhere to it's Meaning as well according to the Evidence of the Words as to the Sense of the Fathers; if we believe it to be the Word of God; and believe God's Word to be immutably true; we cannot doubt of either.

In the xxxvith. Chapter of JOB, it is said to the Wicked: *Because there is Wrath, beware lest GOD take thee away with his Stroke: Then a great Ransom cannot deliver thee.* What can we understand by these Words, but the Eternal Torments which will ensue to impenitent Sinners? The meaning of the Caution is obvious: It cannot be to guard them against Death; for neither Wicked nor Good can withstand God's Stroke in that sense. The meaning then is: *Beware*, that is, *Be prepared by Repentance*, or in other words, *Beware lest*
 he

he take thee away IMPENITENT with his Stroke. And why, but because a great Ransom cannot deliver thee? There is no other Ransom for great or little Wickedness than the Death of Christ: If then this great Ransom will not deliver the impenitent Wicked; he must eternally remain in the Slavery of sin he died in, and consequently be eternally wretched. For if there is no Ransom, no Salvation for him in CHRIST JESUS; neither is there Salvation in any other as St. PETER, fill'd with the Holy Ghost, said to the Jews in the ivth. of the Acts.

In the same Chapter of JOB, a little lower, we are told that God is great, and we know him not, neither can the Number of his Years be search'd out; and five verses lower we are farther told, that by them he judgeth his People. The Number of God's years, which cannot be found out, is his Eternity; and by this ETERNITY he judges his People. And how shall this Divine Eternity make a just distinction between the good and bad Part of his People, but by judging the Good to an Eternity of Bliss, the Wicked to an Eternity of Woe? Wherefore DAVID, in the ninth Psalm, praised God for destroying the Wicked, and putting-out their Name for ever and ever.

The same royal Psalmist tells us, in the xith. Psalm, that upon the Wicked GOD shall rain Snares, Fire and Brimstone, and a horrible

* Psalm.
lviii.

rible Tempest: This shall be the PORTION of their Cup. If then this is all the *Portion* allotted to the Wicked; this is all they have to expect, and the Immortality of their Nature fixing them to their lot, they must *eternally* feed on the bitter bitter Cup of Snares, Fire, Brimstone and Horror. And that this is his meaning, the holy Monarch expresses more fully in another place, * *The Lord, says he, shall take them away in a Whirlwind, both living and in his Wrath, that is, both living, and living in his Wrath, which is eternal.* The Hebrew has it more express †, *as living as his Wrath.* And consequently as his Wrath is *eternal*, so shall their Punishment be.

† *Ibid.*

David, immediately after, to account for this Inflexibility of God's Justice, shews it to be an ineffable effect of his Mercy to the Good. For *the Righteous, says he, shall rejoice when he see'th the Vengeance.* ‡ Whence it plainly appears, that if there were no other Good in it: God is at least infinitely merciful in decreeing those eternal Torments to the Wicked who deserve them, to enhance the Felicity of the Good, who must doubly rejoice in their own happiness, at the sight of what the Wicked endure. Not that their Joy proceeds from any cruel Satisfaction, or Pleasure, in seeing those

†

בָּטָרִם יִבְיִנוּ סִדְרֵי־כַסֵּאֲשֶׁר נִמְדָּהּ כִּי נִמְדָּה חֲרוֹן יִשְׁעֵרֵנוּ:
Wretches

Wretches tormented; but from the Comparison of the infinit Bliss, they *eternally* enjoy, with the *eternal* Misery they have happily escaped; and from the clearer Sight which that Comparison gives them of God's Justice and Mercy. For the real value of every thing is best known by closely comparing it with it's Opposit. And therefore the inspired Monarch seems to insinuate in the same *Psalms*, that the Good in reality wou'd not be fully sensible of their *eternal* Happiness, but for this Comparison of it with the *eternal* Wretchedness of the Wicked, which spirits them up to that extatic acknowledgment of God's Goodness: *Verily there is a Reward for the Righteous. Verily there is a God, who judgeth on the Earth.* * * *Ibid.*

Well then might David soon after in Raptures apostrophize God in the words of my Text: *Unto thee, O Lord, belongeth Mercy: FOR thou renderest to every Man according to his Works.*

Thus far, Christians, we have heard the Sentiments of inspired David. Now let us listen to him in the intervals, when Inspiration forsook him. David, when left to himself, was no more capable than we are, of ourselves, to reconcile the for-ever of God's Justice in punishing the Wicked, with the Infinity of his Mercy. *I remember'd God † and was troubled: I complain'd, † Psalm lxvii. and my Spirit was overwhelm'd. I call to*

E

remembrance

remembrance my song in the night: I commune with my own heart, and my Spirit made diligent search. Will the Lord cast-off forever? and will he be favourable no more? Is HIS MERCY CLEAN-GONE FOR-EVER? DOETH HIS PROMISE FAIL FOR-EVERMORE? Hath GOD forgotten to be gracious? hath he in anger shut up his tender Mercies? What more could be said by the Declaimers against the Eternity of Hell Torments? Why don't the Miscreants quote this for an authority? David first calls the Mercy of GOD in question: Is his Mercy clean gone for-ever? And as one abyss calls on another, he presently doubts of his Justice and Truth: Doth his Promise fail for evermore? A rare Passage for them to apply to their purpose of overthrowing the ineffable Attributes of GOD. Why should they blush to bring this Text, who are not ashamed to pervert others much less to their purpose? Or why indeed should they blush at any thing, who blush not to blaspheme GOD from his Throne, to give Vice a greater authority than it already has? But will this give you a right (O Enemies of Truth) to the Title of *merciful*, which you are pleased to compliment yourselves with? "It is unmerciful, you say, for GOD to give Sinners their Desert." Is it Mercy then for Worms, for Wretches, for wicked Sinners, to rob GOD of his due? And

And must God be made more merciful than becomes him as God to be, merely to prove him less just than he really is, and must be? Oh Age! Oh Manners! How true is that of SOLOMON; * *The tender Mercies of the Wicked are cruel!* *Prov. xii, 10.*

But where is the Wonder that Men, enslaved by their unruly Passions, and made feeble by long Habits of Vice, shou'd be able to reason no better; when *David*, a virtuous Man, a Man after God's own heart, was liable to the same infirmity, when left to himself and to the weakness of his own Understanding? But the Good have still this advantage above the Wicked; that, tho', like These, they are liable, by the frailty of their Nature, to fall into Error and Scepticism; yet the readiness, with which they captivate their Sense to the lights of Faith, enables them to rise again to a clearer Knowledge of God's eternal Truth. In fact, the same *David*, who was mistaken by night, retracts his nightly errors in the day; and, by the help of fresh Inspiration, is enabled to reconcile God's casting off the Wicked for-ever, with the continuance of his Mercy, and the Truth of his Promise. † *I said*, continues the Royal Prophet, *this is my infirmity: But I will remember the years of the right hand of the Most High.* Thus the inspired *David* is by the light of Grace lifted to see thro'

thro' the weakness of his natural Reason and enabled to account for God's *casting off the Wicked FOR-EVER*, by reflecting on the *years of the right hand of God*, that is, the *Eternity of his Justice*; that *Eternity* by which, as we have seen in JOB, he is to *judge his People*. And the same Revelation which illumin'd the Royal Prophet to see into the Divine Justice in *casting-off the Wicked for-ever*, enabled him in like manner to reconcile that Justice with his infinite Mercy, by recollecting the many wonders he had wrought to deter those Wretches from incurring *eternal* Torments, before his inflicting them; as well as the innumerable proofs of his Goodness, by which he endeavour'd to win them to an *Eternity of happiness*. *Thou art the God who do'st Wonders*, says he; * *thou has't declared thy Strength amongst the People. Thou has't with thine arm redeem'd thy People.---The voice of thy Thunder was in the Heaven.---The Earth trembled and shook. Thou led'st thy People like a flock, by the hand of Moses and Aaron*. What more could a merciful God do to win Mankind from the *eternal* Torments he threaten'd to the Wicked, than to shew them his Goodness in *redeeming* them from Sin, *conducting* them as a tender Pastor does his *Flock*, and appointing them Teachers to instruct them in his Will, and in the Means to execute it? What more could

* *Ibid.*

could he do to deter them, than declare his Strength to them, and demonstrate his punishing Power in the voice of his Thunder? And what less cou'd he do as a just God, than eternally punish those obstinate Wretches who wou'd neither be won nor deterr'd from the eternal Punishments he threaten'd them with? Must his Truth fail, or his Mercy be destroy'd? Cannot they, nay must not they, eternally subsist together? Yes, O Lord! Yes, says David * * Psalm lxxxix. 14. Justice and Judgment are the habitation of thy Throne; Mercy and Truth shall (inseparably) go before thy Face. True indeed it is, that thou art merciful, infinitely merciful in the very casting-off the Wicked forever. Because thou Lord, art good, and ready to forgive; and plenteous in Mercy unto all them who call upon thee. † But then † Psalm lxxxvi. 5. thy being merciful hinders thee not from being just to such as despise thy Forgiveness, and neglect to call upon thee. For as thy Mercy is everlasting, so thy Truth † Psalm c. 5. endureth to all generations. †

Wherefore, says God, by the mouth of his Prophet ISAIAH, || " Do not deceive || Chap. xlv. 21. " yourselves, O Mortals; nor think to elude " the eternal rigour of my everlasting Justice, by trusting to my Mercy in the " midst of your Wickedness. I am merciful: But am equally just. And there " is

* Chap.

xxvii. † 1.

† Chap. i.
3.

“ is no God else beside me, a just God and
 “ a Saviour.” There is no God who is a
 Saviour only, and not at the same time a
 just God. For such a Being could not be
 God. They, who vainly imagin so, are a
 People of no Understanding: That is, a
 People whose Understanding is corrupted
 by a perversity of Heart. And * therefore,
 says the same Prophet, *He who made them,*
will have no Mercy on them; and He who
form'd them will shew them no Favour. If
 then God will shew no Mercy, no Favour
 to the impenitent Wicked; is it not plain
 that they must be eternally wretched? Yet
 This no ways proves him to be absolutely
 unmerciful. No, enough it is for his
 Mercy, that, while they were fit Objects
 of it, he shew'd it to them, by being, as
 the Prophet NAHUM tells us, † *as slow to*
Anger as he was great in Power. The
 Greatness of his Power was such, that he
 might have justly punish'd the Wicked, and
 doom'd them to feel the eternal rigour of
 his Justice e'er they compleated their
 Crimes, and that without Injury to his
 Mercy. How gracious then must not he
 be to wait so long for their Repentance, and
 how great does not his Mercy appear in the
 Slowness of his Anger! And ought not his
 Justice then to shine as great in an eternal
 Inflexibility towards those Wretches, whom
 no

no Patience could gain, and no Threats could deter from their inflexible Obstinacy in offending him?

Yes, surely, says the Prophet JEREMIAH, the Sin of these impenitent Sinners is *written with a Pen of Iron, and with the Point of a Diamond* *; and why, but that it

may never be effaced? Nay, God positively says, by the mouth of this same holy Writer in the same place, that it never shall be effaced: *Ye have kindled a Fire in my Anger; which shall burn for ever.* And how could this be, unless Sinners, who are the Fuel of the Fire kindled in God's Anger, should for ever burn in it, without consuming?

This is undoubtedly that *unquenchable, everlasting Fire* which God so often speaks of by the mouth of his Divine Son, who has left us such repeated assurances of the *Eternity of Punishments* reserved for the *Wicked* as render the Disbelief of it absolutely inexcusable. In St. MATTHEW †

speaking parabolically of the *Wicked*, he tells us, that *every Tree which bringeth not good Fruit is hewn down, and cast into the Fire.*

And two verses lower, comparing their *Punishments* with the *Rewards* of the *Good*, he declares them to be *EVERLASTING*; †

He will gather his Wheat into the Garner; but he will burn up the Chaff with UNQUENCHABLE Fire. The very same Phrase is

literally repeated by St. LUKE. || And to ||

shew

* Chap.

xvii.

† Chap. iii.
v. 10.

† Ver. 12.

|| Chap. iii.

v. 17.

* Chap.
xviii. v. 8,
9.
† Chap. ix.
from ver.
43. to 49.

shew how much more dreadful that *Fire* is, from the consideration of *Eternity*, than any mere *temporal* Smart; he compares it with some of the most acute Pains human Nature can be subject to in this Life, as may be seen in St. MATTHEW *, but more fully in St. MARK †; *If thy Hand offend thee, cut it off: It is better for thee to enter into Life maim'd, than, having two Hands, to go into Hell, into the Fire which NEVER SHALL BE QUENCHED; where their Worm DIETH NOT and the Fire IS NOT QUENCHED. And if thy Foot offend thee; cut it off: It is better for thee to enter halt into Life, than, having two Feet; to be cast into Hell, into the Fire which NEVER SHALL BE QUENCHED; where their Worm DIETH NOT, and the Fire IS NOT QUENCHED. And if thine Eye offend thee; pluck it out: It is better for thee to enter into the Kingdom of GOD with one Eye, than, having two Eyes, to be cast into Hell-Fire; where their Worm DIETH NOT, and the Fire IS NOT QUENCHED. For Every-one shall be SALTED WITH FIRE. The Repetitions of the unquench'd unquenchable fire, and of the Worm which DIES NOT, are plain Indications of the Eternity of those Punishments: A Consideration which must make the cutting-off a Limb, or plucking out an Eye, or any other of the acutest pains of this Life, fall infinitely short of those which the*
Reprobate

Reprobate hereafter shall endure in that *unquenchable Fire*; which, as our Saviour metaphorically expresses it, instead of consuming them, and putting thus an end to their Misery, shall *for-ever* preserve them to feel it's Rigour; as Salt is to Meat a Preservative from Corruption or Decay.

In St. MARK, * the same Divine Oracle assures us, that, *He who shall blaspheme against the Holy-Ghost hath never Forgiveness, but is in Danger of ETERNAL DAMNATION.* If he *hath never Forgiveness*; how shall he *ever* be happy with God? Or how shall an immortalized Being *never* be happy with God; and yet *not* be *for-ever* miserable without him? If the unmerciful Pleaders for unjust Mercy should answer, that "He, who is only in *Danger of eternal Damnation*, cannot be actually in it: " And therefore, as the greatest of Crimes " is threaten'd only with the *Danger*, the " *Reality* cannot be Any-one's Lot;" let me beg leave to reply, that, if there is a *Danger of eternal Damnation*; there must also be an *eternal Damnation in fact*: Since it is impossible to be in danger of what has *no Being*.

In the Gospel of St. LUKE, † our Saviour makes *Abraham* tell the *rich Man* in Hell: *Between us and you there is a great Gulf fix'd; so that they who would pass hence to you, cannot: Neither can they pass*

to us, who would come from thence. If the Wicked then never can pass the Gulph fix'd between them and the Good, nor receive any consoling Visits from them; must they not remain eternally in their Misery, spite of all their vain Efforts and Wishes? --- Again,

* Chap.
xiii. v. 47,
to 50.

In St. MATTHEW, * Christ expressly compares the *Wicked* to the *bad Fish*, which, after the good are put-up into Vessels, are thrown away. So, adds he---the *Angels shall sever the Wicked*; that is, throw them away like *bad Fish*, not laid aside to be afterwards made use of, but *thrown away forever*. This is the plain sense of the Text, as will appear from the words at length: *The Kingdom of Heaven is like unto a Net that was cast into the Sea, and gather'd of every kind; which, when it was full, they drew to shore, and sat down and gather'd the good into Vessels, but cast the bad away: So shall it be at the end of the World: The Angels shall come forth, and sever the Wicked from among the Just, and shall cast them into the Furnace of Fire; there shall be weeping and gnashing of Teeth.*

† 2 *Thess.*
i. from 7,
to 9.

Agreeable to this are the Words of St. PAUL, † *To you who are troubled Rest with us, when the Lord JESUS shall be reveal'd from Heaven, with his mighty Angels, in flaming Fire, taking Vengeance on them who know not God, and who obey not the*
the

the Gospel of our Lord JESUS CHRIST; who shall be punish'd with EVERLASTING DESTRUCTION FROM THE PRESENCE OF THE LORD, and from the Glory of his Power.

In St. JOHN, * Christ not only confirms this, but tells us, that the time of this Vengeance is nigh at hand, and that None of the Wicked shall escape it; *The Hour is coming, says he, in which all who are in the graves shall hear his Voice, and shall come forth, They who have done Good unto the Resurrection of Life; and They who have done Evil unto the Resurrection of Damnation.* Now, must it not be own'd that both Good and Bad rise alike to Immortality? Or, can it be denied, that *the Resurrection of the Good is to eternal Life?* This the Declaimers against the *Eternity of Hell-Torments* do not pretend to: Why then shall not the *Resurrection of the Bad* be to *eternal Damnation?* How else is this the Last Judgment?

But our Blessed Saviour, to put this matter past all Dispute, has given us, in St. MATTHEW, † the very Sentences which shall be pronounced on the Good and the BAD: *Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, COME, YE BLESSED OF MY FATHER, INHERIT THE KINGDOM PREPARED FOR YOU FROM THE FOUNDATION OF THE WORLD. ‡ Then shall he say also*

* Chap. v.
ver. 28,
29.

† Chap.
xxv. ver.
34.

‡ Ibid. ver.
41, 42.

unto them on the left hand; DEPART FROM ME, YE CURSED, INTO EVERLASTING FIRE, PREPARED FOR THE DEVIL AND HIS ANGELS. *And These shall go into EVERLASTING PUNISHMENT; but the Righteous into LIFE ETERNAL.* Whence appears, that the *Punishments* reserved for the *Wicked*, will have the very same Duration as the *Rewards* prepared for the *Good*, which most of our Adversaries themselves own to be *eternal* in the strictest Sense of the Word.

¶ Ver. 6, 7. Farther, St. JUDE, * puts the *Reprobate* upon the same footing, after the General Judgment, with the DEVILS: *And the Angels which kept not their first Estate, but left their own Habitation, he hath reserved in EVERLASTING CHAINS under darkness, unto the Judgment of the Great Day. Even as Sodom and Gomorrah, and the Cities about them, in like manner, giving themselves over to Fornication, and going after strange Flesh, are set forth for an Example, suffering the Vengeance of ETERNAL FIRE.* Now the exclusion of the *Devils* from the first State must be *eternal*: Mankind having been created to fill their vacant Seats. As therefore, in the Day of Judgment, those vacant Seats will be compleatly fill'd, where shall these fallen Angels find room to hope for admittance? And, if the *Devils* are to suffer *eternally*, how shall those *Wretches*, who are upon the same footing,

footing, escape the like Fate? It is for this reason St. PETER * calls them *Wells without water, Clouds that are carried with a Tempest, to whom the Mist of darkness is reserved* FOR-EVER. And St. JUDE; † *wandering Stars, to whom is reserved the blackness of darkness* FOR-EVER. * 2 Chap. xi. ver. 17. † Ver. 13.

So express are the Holy Scriptures, both Old and New! Nothing then but wilful Obstinacy and Infidelity can make those who admit their authority, call the *Eternity of Hell-Torments* in question. I might quote innumerable other Texts as plain as these I have alledged: But I think these more than sufficient to prove this Doctrine irrefragable. However, I shall add one more from the Revelations of St. JOHN, † † Chap. xx. 10. who, after speaking of the temporal Judgment of GOD on the WICKED, adds: *And the Devil, who deceived them, was cast into the Lake of Fire and Brimstone; where the Beast and the false Prophet are, and SHALL BE TORMENTED day and night FOR-EVER AND EVER.* Where it is very remarkable, that the Apostle makes use of the very same emphatic Words *for-ever and ever*, to express the Duration of the *Punishments* of those unhappy Beings, as he afterwards applies to express the Duration of the *Felicity* prepared for the BLESSED, of whom he says, that *They shall reign FOR-EVER AND EVER.* From all which it is self-evident

dent, that as the *Resurrection* of the *Good* which our Saviour speaks of in the Gospel of this sacred Writer above-quoted, is a *Resurrection* to *Life-eternal*, so shall the *Resurrection* of the *Wicked* be a *Resurrection* to *eternal Damnation*.

And however it may seem severe to such as are but little disposed to avoid the Consequence of this Sentence, our Saviour fully clears his Mercy in the Sequel of this Chapter: *I can of my own self do nothing*, says he: *As I hear I judge; and my Judgment is just*. That is, as GOD, I cannot do any thing unmerciful or unjust. The Sentence I pass must be according to what *I hear*. In rewarding the GOOD with ETERNAL LIFE, *my Judgment is just*; and in punishing the WICKED with ETERNAL DAMNATION, *my Judgment is still just*: *And to Me belongeth Mercy in both; FOR I render to every Man according to his Work*.

May I not then conclude this part of my Discourse with St. PAUL, in the *iiid.* to the ROMANS: *Therefore thou art inexcusable, O Man, whosoever thou art who judgest: For wherein thou judgest GOD, thou condemnest thyself. And thinkest thou this, O Man, that thou shalt escape the Judgment of GOD? Or despisest thou the Riches of his Goodness and Forbearance, and Long-suffering; not knowing that the Goodness of GOD leadeth thee to Repentance? But after thy*
Hardness

Hardness and impenitent Heart, treasurest up unto thyself Wrath unto the Day of Wrath, and Revelation of the righteous Judgment of GOD, who will render to every Man according to his Deeds.

Thus far, Christians, I have given you sufficient Evidence, I hope, from the *Prophets, Apostles*, and CHRIST himself, to reconcile the *Justice and Mercy* of GOD in inflicting *eternal Torments* on the *Wicked*: And thus far I have proved this irrefragable Doctrin from the Holy Scripture: Which I have taken according to the natural unwrested unforced and obvious Meaning of the Words; and as they are universally understood by the Holy Fathers and Divines of the Church in all Ages. And that the Fathers and Divines did understand the Eternity of Hell Torments in this natural obvious Sense of a proper Eternity A PARTE POST, or *futurely*; the few Passages I shall here give, out of the innumerable many I could give (if the Limits of a Sermon wou'd permit) will suffice to remove all just occasion of Doubt.

“ Every-One (*says ORIGENES **) who
 “ confesses not the Father and his Son Jesus
 “ Christ to be the only true GOD is estran-
 “ ged from *eternal* Life. For this Con-
 “ fession is declared to be Life *everlast-*
 “ *ing.*” Whatever unsafe Opinions then
 Origenes might entertain concerning the
 HOLY-

* EPIST.
ad Rom.

HOLY-GHOST: It is plain he acknowledged a proper Eternity of Existence in human Beings, *for the future.*

*TRACT.
de Mortal.
Tate.

ST. CYPRIAN *says*: * "We look upon
" Paradise as our Native Country: Already
" have we there our Parents the Patri-
" archs: Why then do we not haste and
" push-on; that we may enjoy the Sight of
" our Country, the Embraces of our Pa-
" rents? There an innumerable Number
" of Friends are waiting for us: Their a
" large and copious Multitude of Parents
" Brethren and Children are wishing for
" our Arrival; already assured of their
" own Immortality, but still solicitous for
" ours."

† Ad DE-
MET.

" Neither (says he elsewhere †) can
" He be other than joyful and thankful,
" who, having once been subject to Death
" and Mortality, is become so happy as to
" have *Immortality* ensured to him." See
the same Venerable Father *de Laude Mar-*
tyrii; if that Work be his, as it proba-
bly is.

† In
PSALM
xliv.

" In *eternal* Life (says St. BASIL †)
" there is no more Change neither in Body
" nor in Soul: No more Contradiction of
" Thoughts; no more Diversity of Senti-
" ments; no more Disturbance to interrupt
" the Steadiness of a quiet Mind. No:
" That is the Region of the Living, who
" *perpetually* exist in an uninterrupted
" Equality

“ Equality and Likeness to themselves, in a
 “ Day which has no Night, in a Life
 “ which suffers no Sleep or other Image of
 “ Death, &c.”

St. AMBROSE * argues thus: “ If this * *De Resurrex-*
 “ Life is in itself to be fled from, to be *SURRECT.*
 “ quitted, that we may flee from Vexation,
 “ that we may rest from Miseries; how much
 “ more is that Rest to be coveted, which
 “ shall give *Perpetuity* to the Joys which
 “ are to succeed our future Resurrection?”

“ Where is our mighty Grievance (*says*
 “ St GREGORY Nazianzen †) in being † *Orat. 19.*
 “ snatch’d from hence to be placed in a
 “ State of *true Life*? in being deliver’d
 “ from the Inconstancies, vapourish Fickle-
 “ ness and Surfeits of our present Situation,
 “ to be placed in common with other *per-*
 “ *manent* and *unchangeable Beings*, like so
 “ many exulting Luminaries, around the
 “ Sovereign Source of Light?”

St. CYRILL † has these Words: “ It was † *In Jo-*
 “ meet, not only that the Soul should be *han. liii.*
 “ lifted by the Holy Spirit to the Possession *c. 39.*
 “ of a Blessed Life; but even that this our
 “ vile *Body* should be render’d *immortal* by
 “ the very Ministry of it’s kindred Senses,
 “ such as the Tasting Touching, and Nu-
 “ trition.”

The following Reflection is of St. PETER
 CHRYSOLOGUS || upon these Words of || *Sermon*
 St. PAUL: *Every-one, who striveth for the* *cxix.*
 G *Mastery,*

Mastery, refraineth himself from all things: And They indeed that they may receive a corruptible Crown, but we an incorruptible One. " If then, (*says the Saint*) some Persons undertake excessive Toils for the sake of a perishable Diadem; how much more does it not behove us to grudge no Labour, who have the Promise of a heavenly Recompense with a Crown of eternal Glory." And a little lower: " The Blessed Martyrs (*adds he*) not only in the Field of Battle conquer'd the Enormities of Sin, but even gain'd a compleat Victory over Death itself and took Possession of Immortality for their Recompense."

Thus far it appears that these Fathers were unanimously agreed in the Belief of a proper Eternity of the Existence of the Blessed. And since our Divine Lord puts the Just and the Unjust, the Elect and the Reprobate on the same footing with regard to the Duration of their Existence; It is plain that these Sacred Authors who asserted the Eternity of Rewards prepared for the Former, must also hold the like Eternity of Punishments prepared for the Latter. But to put the Matter past the power of Equivocation, let us hear the express Sentiments of Some of them on this very head.

The

The last mention'd Father then in another Sermon * speaking of the Rich Man in Hell, reasons thus: "What a Folly
" was not his to expect (*says he*) from a
" Father the Mercy he had denied to a
" Brother? *Have Mercy on me?* What
" had Mercy to do with him, to whom
" all was turn'd into Matter of Torment?
" Or what Relief could his Petitions obtain from a Father in whose Breast He
" had his Accuser?"

Now tho' this Venerable Writer be here speaking literally of the Father *Abraham*; it is self-evident that he speaks allegorically of the Divine Father. Otherwise his Argument would conclude Nothing. For inasmuch as all was turn'd into Matter of Torment for that hapless Wretch, by so much would Mercy have had a great deal the more room to interfere in his Relief; if (as the Saint supposes and must suppose) the immutable Truth and infinit Justice of God had not required that Matter of Torment to be everlastingly irreparable: That same immutable Truth and incorruptible Justice persisting forever as an Accuser of his unrepenting Obstinacy. And that this was the Sense in which the Holy Father mean'd to express himself appears from the Conclusion he thence draws a little lower: "If then (*continues he*) the subterraneous Prison of Hell has an indisputable
G 2 Existence;

“ Existence; if there is a *navois ardens*, a
 “ burning Fire; if there is a Hell to tor-
 “ ment *without end*; alas! Whence this
 “ our senseless Stupidity? Where are we?
 “ What strange Dream is it which seduces
 “ us? What unaccountable Self-Absence
 “ is it which thus weds us to Death? &c.”

St. Hierom is very express in this Mat-
 * *Epist.* 34. ter. * “ The Devil (*says he*) and his An-
 “ gels, with all who do his Works and de-
 “ fame their Brethren, shall along with
 “ him suffer alike the miserable Inheritance
 “ of eternal Fire. And if any one deny
 “ that the Devils are to be confined to
 “ eternal Flames; he too shall have his
 “ part of God's Inheritance with him, but
 “ shall receive that part in the same Fire,
 “ where he will one day sadly feel the
 “ Truth he now so rashly denies”

† *Homil.*
 33. in
 MATTH.

“ But let any Man suppose ten thousand
 “ Hells (*says St. JOHN CHRYSOSTOM* †)
 “ He supposes nothing in Comparison with
 “ the being excluded from the Glory of
 “ Heaven and the hearing Christ say: *I*
 “ *know you not.*” I presume then that ten
 of the Hells of your Millenarian Dreamers,
 would be (at least) nine times less than
 Nothing to the Idea which this Holy Fa-
 ther entertain'd of that Mansion of Horror.
 For if the Damnation of the Reprobate
 chiefly consists in their being disown'd by
 Christ; and Christ's eternal Truth consists
 in

in being eternally consistent in itself; must not they be eternally disown'd by him, who have once deserved to be so, and can never more deserve the opposit by the irrevocable State of their Obstinacy in Evil? And if they are eternally disown'd by him; must they not be eternally wretched without him?

For, says St. AUGUSTIN: * "In Hell
 " the Reprobate will be tormented with * *De Fide*
 " the Sting of Repentance, but will never *ad PET.*
 " be emended by the Conversion of their
 " Will: They will condemn indeed their
 " own Iniquity; but with such fruitless
 " Aversion as shall not make them ena-
 " mour'd with the Justice opposit to it;
 " for this they will never more be able to
 " love or desire." See the same Father
Genes. lib. 8. likewise *Serm ad Erem.* and
 in innumerable other Places.

" The Soul which is once fix'd in that
 " wretched Place (*says the Great St. GRE-*
 " GORY †) may well be said to have lost
 " it's Being, without losing it: Being com- † *Moral.*
 " pel'd to endure for ever a deathless *iv.*
 " Death; a Defection which shall know no
 " Desistence; and an End without any
 " Conclusion: Inasmuch as it's Death be-
 " comes immortal; it's Defection becomes
 " indefectible; and it's End extended to
 " an infinit Duration." And elsewhere †
 the same venerable Father accounts for it † *Moral.*
 thus; " The Fire of Hell being incorpo- *ix.*
 " real,

“ real, shall nevertheless corporally torture
 “ the Reprobate who are thrown into it :
 “ It is neither kindled by human Art, nor
 “ nourish’d with combustible Fuel; but
 “ once created, is unquenchably lasting;
 “ for it requires no Supplies of Matter,
 “ and can receive no Addition to the
 “ Intensity of it’s Ardour.” See the
 same Sacred Writer *Moral viii.* In *illud*
Matth. viii. *They shall be cast into utter*
Darkness. Likewise *Moral. xv, xxx.* and
 innumerable other Places.

* *De Sum-*
mo Bono.
 l. i.

“ The Fire of Hell (says St. ISIDORE *)
 “ shall blaze clear enough to it’s wretched
 “ Inhabitants to augment their Misery, by
 “ discovering to them every Object which
 “ may strike them with Horror, but ne-
 “ ver so clear as to afford them matter of
 “ Joy in any Prospect of Consolation.”

† *SERM.*
iv. Qua-
drag.

The same also Saint BERNARD tells us in
 other Words † “ We have deserved Hell,
 “ (says he) where there is no Refection
 “ ever to be tasted; no Consolation to be
 “ met with; no End to be come at. And
 the Reason for it he gives us elsewhere.

‡ *EPIST.*
 253.

“ ‡ Therefore is it, says the Saint, that the
 “ Guilt of the unrelenting Sinner, tho’ but
 “ transiently committed will be eternally
 “ punish’d; because that Guilt, tho’ very
 “ brief in his execution of it, is lasting in the
 “ perversity of his Will: Insomuch that,
 “ was he never to die, he would never
 “ desist

“ desist from Sin : And therefore does he
 “ covet to live forever, only that he m
 “ be capable of sinning-on forever.”

The Words of HUGO are likewise very strong. * “ Hell, *says he*, is an immea-

“ surable Lake, an unfathomable Deep, * *De Ani-*

“ full of unparallel’d Heat, intolerable *ma lib. iv.*

“ Stench, and innumerable Pains. There

“ resides nothing but Wretchedness, utter

“ Darkness, and no manner of Order.

“ There abides eternal Horror ; there, in

“ a word, there is no Good to hoped for,

“ and no Evil which may not be expected.”

I might have added many other very weighty Passages out of the abovemention’d Fathers and Divines; and could still add, out of other Sacred Orthodox Writers (yet unmention’d) of every Century from that of Christ to the present, an almost innumerable Number of irrefragable Authorities: All as express and many much more express than the Few I have here produced, in proof of the universal constant Assent of the Church to the invincible Doctrin of the *proper Eternity of Hell Torments*. But These would require a very large Volume apart : And therefore I purposely omit them to avoid Prolixity. †

† A Prolixity unpardonable in a Work, which still bears the Title of a Sermon ; and which therefore was preach’d and, at its first Appearance, printed without any other Quotations than Those taken from Holy-Writ.

For the very same reason I have forborn to transcribe, in their proper Places, St. JUSTIN *Martyr*, ATHENAGORAS the Christian Philosopher of *Athens*, St. THEOPHILUS Archbishop of that *See*, and *Tertullian*; who are All very strenuous in the Support of this Doctrin: St. JUSTIN. *Apolo-*
log. i. p. 41, 45, 46.----- *Apolo-*
log. ii. p. 59, 64, 67, 71, 87.----- *Dialog. cum Tryph.* p. 254, 264.----- *Epist. ad Diognet.* p. 501:-----
 ATHENAGORAS, *de Resurrect. Mortuor.* p. 54:----- St. THEOPHILUS, *Epist. ad Autolic.* i. p. 78; and *Epist. ad Eundem* ii. p. 110, 112. For all which Quotations see the joint Edition of the Works of these Fathers printed in folio at *Paris* by C. Morelle, Anno 1636.----- And TERTULLIAN, *Apologet adv. Gentes* p. 48. cap. xiii. and p. 79. cap. xlviii. *in fin.* together with his Paraphrast, *Zephyrus*, and his Commentator *Pamelius*, to be seen in the folio Edition of him at *Paris* 1616.

Now all these Authorities can mean Nothing, if they do not mean a proper Eternity of Duration belonging to Human Beings: Whether those Beings be in a State of Glory hereafter, or in a State of Torment, when they shall have once left the unsettled State of this Life for the Permanence of another. And if they do mean thus much; can it be any longer denied, or doubted, that, according to the Sacred Scriptures,
 and

and the Sense in which the Fathers understood them, the Torments of unrepenting Sinners in a future State must be *eternal*, properly *eternal*?

But what can Scripture avail towards convincing Men, who are, perhaps, ready to give-up the very Scriptures, and Christ himself, rather than think of the Eternity of those Torments, which they are but too conscious of having deserved and are not sufficiently resolved to avoid, by Repentance or Amendment of a Life which at present suits the Corruption of their Hearts. Still for the sake of Truth let us proceed to shew,

II. The Conformity of this Doctrine with Right Reason, from the Nature of the *Infinite Offended*, and of the *finite Offender*,

The Soul of Man, in this mortal State, is so miserably immersed in Matter, Flesh, and Body, that it is almost incapable of conceiving any Thought but what is, in some measure, more or less carnal, and partaking of Matter. Hence it is with the utmost difficulty, that the Mind soars to any Ideas ever so little abstracted from Matter, or from what is analagous to, and bears a proportion with, Matter and Flesh. Nevertheless, we can never be able to form

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any

any Notions worthy the Divine Being, without abstracting and purifying them from all Matter and from all Comparison with what is created. To our Weakness, in this particular, may be attributed all the gross and mistaken Ideas we form of God and his Divine Attributes. And this is the Rock on which have splitten those grossly mistaken Men, who, to prove God *merciful*, in the sense in which they would have him so, attempt nothing less than to make him *unjust*. Unable to soar to the comprehension of what *he is*, they would fain lower him to what *they are*. Men are sometimes just, but then their Justice is Rigour, Severity, and tainted with Cruelty; they are at other times merciful too, but then their Mercy is Fellow-feeling, Softness, and conscious Weakness. The One flows from a mixture of Fear and Self-preservation; the Other from a mixture of Fear and of Love of ease: They do Justice not to be oppress'd by the Injustice they fear; and they shew Mercy thro' fear of incurring the Misery they see before them, and are conscious of being liable to, from the uneasiness they feel at the sight of it. In short, their Justice is the Strut of fancied Strength, and their Mercy the Abortion of real Weakness. They are never merciful and just together: For (as their Justice and Mercy flow from different Principles) when they are merciful, it is by relaxing

relaxing from the Strictness of Justice; and when they are strictly just, it is by stifling the Yearnings of Mercy. 'Tis by this rule the Declaimers against the *eternal Punishments* of the Wicked, pretend to measure the Justice and Mercy of God. They have no other Ideas of either than the unworthy ones they form from a vile comparison of them with their own. For want of giving themselves the trouble to soar above their corrupt imaginations, they have no other Epithets to give the Divine Justice than *severe, revengeful, dire, cruel, &c.* and no other Terms to express his Mercy by, than *Pity, and Compassion*: As if God could not be just without being cruel, or taking a pleasure in punishing us; and could not be merciful without compassioning or feeling, and sharing with us in our Miseries. What an unworthy Idea for Creatures to entertain of the Creator!

No, God is just, and he is merciful; but he is neither cruel nor compassionate, in the real meaning of these Words: He neither is capable of enjoying any cruel Pleasure in seeing his Creatures miserable, nor of feeling the Miseries they endure. His Anger consists not, like ours, in any disorderly tumult within him; his Wrath is only such an essential Aversion from Evil, as requires the removal of the Evil from his Presence: And his Mercy is no Sensa-

tion of the Sufferings he relieves, but an absolute Communication of his Goodness in the relief. In a word, he is not just thro' the Fear of Injustice, or merciful thro' any Yieldingness of his Nature to sympathised Misery: But he is both just and merciful, because it is consistent with the immutable Truth of his Divine Nature to be so.

Hence appears the essential Difference between the Justice and Mercy of Creatures, and the Justice and Mercy of God: Created Justice and Mercy proceed from different Causes, have different Objects, and pursue different Ends; and therefore may exist separate: But the Justice and Mercy of God issue from the same immutable Truth, have immutable Truth for their End, and immutable Truth for their Object, as well in the Felicity bestow'd on the Good, as in the Misery inflicted on the Wicked; and therefore God cannot be just without being merciful, and cannot be merciful without being just. It is immutably true, that the Good, in virtue of God's merciful Promise, deserve the Glory they are crown'd with; then it is immutable Truth in God that makes him merciful and just in bestowing that Glory. So it is unalterably true, that the Wicked claim and merit the Punishments which God inflicts on them, inasmuch as they
refuse

refuse those mercifully promised Rewards, and chuse the Punishments which he mercifully threaten'd them with, to deter them from Wickedness; therefore God's unalterable Truth, makes him just and merciful in giving them the Punishments they have chosen. Now it is inconsistent with this immutable Truth, that God should ever be good, or *just and merciful*, only by halves, and not render to Every-one to the full extent of his Desert; therefore it is immutably true, that God must inflict *eternal* Punishments on the Reprobate, because their Wickedness deserves that the Punishment they have chosen, preferably to the Rewards they might have chosen, should be *eternal*.

Every Offence is measured by the Malice of the Offender, and the Greatness of the Person offended. An Insult done to an Equal is a Crime, but becomes an Outrage when done to a Master, adds Rebellion in a Child to his Parent, and is High Treason from a Subject to his Sovereign. It must therefore be infinit when offer'd to an Infinit Being. However, for this to be true, there must be Malice in the Person from whom the Insult comes; and to have Malice he must be in Possession of Reason and Free-will in an actual power of Choice. Wherefore a Child and a Changeling, are incapable of having Malice in the true
Sense

Sense of the Word; because, tho' they have a Will, they have not Reason to direct it. In like manner, a Man who is perfectly *compus* is incapable of Malice in an act he is irresistibly forced to; and therefore should a Man in his Senses, falling from the top of a house kill his father, or his Sovereign, he is not guilty of Parricide, or Regicide, because not in possession of Choice. But a Man perfectly posselt of Sense and Liberty, cannot commit an offence without Guilt; because the Possession he is in of his Reason and Free-will, proves his Assent to the Evil, and therefore argues a Malice in him proportion'd to the Nature of the Offence. As therefore the Wicked must be supposed to be intelligent Free-Agents, otherwise they could not be Wicked, they must be guilty of an infinite Malice in the Crimes they commit against God.

Nor will it avail, to extenuate their Malice, to say, that God is impassible by Nature, and therefore incapable of receiving any real Injury from the Crimes of the Wicked. It is true that God cannot be destroy'd: But are any Attempts to destroy him less criminal for that? God is so essentially Truth and Goodness, that were he not immutable, Falsity and Wickedness would destroy him? That therefore he is not destroy'd, there are no thanks due to the

the False and the Wicked, but to his own Divine Immutability. Should a man squir a Stone at a Glass, and the Glass not break; would any Thanks be due to the Flinger? He did his utmost: The Stone by it's nature was sufficiently opposed to the Glass to shatter it: And, that it did not; is not owing to the Man who squirr'd it, but to the Resistibility of the Glass. So, if I may be allow'd to compare little Things with great; the Prophane with the Sacred; and the Finite with the Infinit; that God cannot suffer any real Injury in his own Divine Person, all the thanks and glory is due to the Immutability of his nature; but the Malice of the Man, who attempts to injure or insult him, is still the same: And nothing can extenuate the infinit Malice of it. For tho' a Man, as a finite limited Being, is incapable of producing any physical Effect infinit in itself; yet all his Actions, consider'd as moral, are specified by the Object they terminate in: And therefore every Offence against God which destroys his Grace, may and must assume an infinit Guilt; because it is an Insult to an Infinit Being.

Now as it appears that God is essentially just, he must essentially require an infinit Satisfaction for an infinit Offence done to him. And this infinit Satisfaction can be given him no other way than by the Offender

fender himself, or by the infinit Merits of the Mediation of Christ. Once therefore the Wicked refuse that Mediation by dying in their Sin, they have no means of making that infinit Satisfaction, but by an infinit Punishment suffer'd in their own Persons. And as the Finiteness of their own Nature renders them incapable of suffering a Punishment infinit in the bulk, that Punishment must be infinit in point of Duration, and consequently *eternal*.

Again, those very Punishments they suffer are Something created, and therefore cannot be infinit in any other Sense than the Infinity of their Duration.

Thus then it appears, upon the whole, that if we consider the Nature of the *Infinit Offended*, of the *finite Offender*, and of the *infinit Satisfaction* due to the *Former* from the *Latter*, the *Torments* of the Wicked must be *eternal*.

To reconcile this *Infinit Justice* in God with the *Infinity* of his *Mercy*, it will suffice to reflect, that the *Infinit Mercy* of God, places before the Wicked *eternal* Happiness, or Misery; gives them Power, Means and Aid to chuse the *Former*; and often, even after their chusing the *Latter*, offers them the Mediation of his holy Son for a Satisfaction of the infinit Offence they commit in chusing the *Latter*: And is slow in Anger, to give them the sufficient Time
(and

(and more than sufficient) to accept that Mediation. If then they reject all this, and prefer an Infinity of Torments to an *eternal* Felicity, and their own future miserable Satisfaction for their Crimes to the saving present Satisfaction of Christ; is it not Mercy as well as Justice in God, to reward them with their own Option? What Greater Mercy can a merciful Judge shew, than to give a Criminal the choice of his own Sentence? God therefore is infinitely merciful at the same time as he is inflexibly just, in rewarding the Wicked with those infinit Punishments which they inflexibly chuse, earn, and prefer to infinit Felicity. To this, if we add the enhancement of Felicity which the Good receive from the comparison of their *eternal* Happiness, with the *eternal* Misery of these Wretches; we must be lost to all Grace and Shame, if we do not glorify God and acknowledge him to be equally as merciful as he is just in inflicting *eternal* Torments on the Wicked. Convinced with the Royal Psalmist, that *unto thee, O Lord, belongeth Mercy: FOR thou renderest to every Man, according to his Work.*

But some Men are not to be convinced. Their Wishes, or their Fears, stand them in the stead of Conviction: Every Fallacy of their weak Understanding is with them a Demonstration: And the Texts of Scripture they least comprehend are the most
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irrefragabl

irrefragable Authorities they have to build upon. However, that they may have no room to plead Ignorance as an excuse for their Obstinacy; let us examin:

III. The most important Objections which can be offer'd against this fundamental Point of Faith; and conclude the whole with some moral Reflections.

“ Let us represent God to ourselves, antecedent to the Creation, designing to form intelligent Beings. What could we presume concerning the State of such Beings to be produced and to issue from the all-powerful hands of a Creator perfectly happy in himself, but that they likewise should be made as happy as their finite Capacities would admit them to be? For what other end could a self-sufficing independent Being, incapable of receiving any addition to his own Felicity, have, in forming Creatures to his own likeness, than that of making them as happy as they could be? ” Thus set out our modern Sticklers against the *Eternity* of Hell-Torments; and thus will I fairly start with them, to examin what can be inferr'd from this Supposition?

“ Why truly, *say they*, there is no place for any thing but Benevolence and Happiness.

of the T O R M E N T S of H E L L.

“ piness. The pure and perfect God cannot possibly do any thing but what is so.”

True: And what then? Is not Justice and Punishment, when due, equally good with Benevolence and Happiness, where merited? The pure and perfect God then is equally good in punishing with Justice, as in rewarding with Mercy.

To return then to the Creation.--- If we suppose, as indeed we ought, that God from all *Eternity* decree'd the Creation of intelligent Beings, to enjoy *eternal* Happiness in as ample a manner as their Nature would admit of; we must suppose that he decree'd them to be perfectly free: *First*, because nothing can be perfectly happy without perfect Liberty; and, *secondly*, because without perfect Liberty they could not have purchased that *eternal* Happiness, nor possess it in their own Right: --- A Condition without which their Happiness would have been but Half-Happiness, since no Felicity we hold as a mere unmerited Gift is equal to That which we possess in some measure in our own Right. In consequence then of God's designing his intelligent Creatures to be as happy as they could be, it was necessary he should decree them to be created in such a State as might enable them to possess their Happiness in their own Right, by purchasing it. Now Mankind being but Creatures at the best,

and of finite Capacities, could not possibly be in a State of purchasing infinit Felicity in the most perfect manner, but by God's laying them under Restrictions, and promising them that Felicity as a Reward for complying with these Restrictions. And if the Promise of rewarding their Compliance with infinit Felicity could be any Inducement to them to obey him; the Threat of punishing their Disobedience with infinit Misery must add a farther Inducement to their Compliance. This necessarily implies, that Men must be created Free-Agents, and absolutely able and provided with means to obey, or disobey, the Commands God lay'd upon them. For whatever is not perfectly free and able to act, or not act, cannot merit Reward, or Punishment, for obeying, or disobeying. To prove then that the Decree of *eternal* Punishments is no ways derogatory from, but, on the contrary, an ineffable effect of God's infinit Goodness, it will be sufficient to reflect, that God created Man to be eternally happy in his own Right, and to avoid *eternal* Misery, if he so pleases; and created him in a state, and with means, suited to that purpose.

“ But why did not God create Man
 “ incapable of disobeying him, and consequently deserving *eternal* Punishment?
 “ Would not That have been more consistent

“ consistent with infinit Bounty and Benevolence?”

I answer, no; for the reason above assign'd. Man could not be compleatly happy, without being so, in some measure, by his own Right, in virtue of God's Promise: He could not merit Happiness, in virtue of that Promise, in so compleat a manner as he now can, without a Free-Will to obey, or disobey, God's Commands; and therefore it was more consistent with God's infinit Goodness and Benevolence to create him free to Good and Evil. For tho' the Liberty, essential to absolute Merit, be merely that of *acting* or *not acting*, and not that of *doing Good* or *Evil*; yet the consideration of Liberty to do *Good*, or *Evil*, must greatly enhance the Merit of such mere Men as, being free to both, reject the Latter, and make choice of the Former, in Obedience to the Grace given by God to direct them in their Choice. Notwithstanding which, Christ most perfectly merited, in the strictest Sense; tho' he could not sin. For in the Instant of his Incarnation he was establish'd in Sanctity by that Divine *Hypostasis* under which both his Natures subsisted. And as his Divine Nature, thus divinely subsisted, was *eternally* and *naturally* entitled to that immense Self-Happiness which, from all *Eternity*, it enjoys; so his Human Nature, from

from the Instant of his Incarnation, in virtue of that *hypostatic Union*, became *eminently* entitled to possess in the most perfect manner possible, by possessing, in it's own Right, the fulness of Bliss, it now enjoys, to all *Eternity*. And therefore a Liberty to Evil was so far from being requisite in Christ to merit; that it could not even have enhanced his Merit, or, in the least, added to the *eminent* Right he had to Glory. Nay, such a Liberty was incompatible with his Nature, consider'd in it's *hypostatic* Circumstance. For thus consider'd, his Will and the Divine Will were in an unalterable conformity; and therefore tho' Christ had the Liberty of *not acting*, if he had so pleased, what he positively did act; yet if he had chosen *not to act*, his *not acting* would have been equally from a Principle of Goodness, because it would have proceeded from the Conformity of his Human Will to That of his Divinity. But, with regard to mere Man, the Case is quite different. There is not that intimate Conformity between his and God's Will: And tho', consider'd abstractedly, he might absolutely merit without a Liberty of *Contrariety*, as the Divines call it, *that is*, without being free to Good or Evil; (the Liberty of *Contradiction*, that is, the Liberty to *act* or *not act*, being alone essential to Merit in itself) nevertheless,

vertheless, if we consider Man under the present Dispensation, and subject to the positive Law of God; it was absolutely necessary for him, in order to merit, that he should have a Liberty of *Contrariety*, or a Liberty to *Good* or *Evil*: Not because this Condition is essential to *Liberty in itself*, but because a Creature, subject to God's positive Law, when bid to *act*, could not abstain from acting, without disobeying the Command of God, and consequently doing *Evil*; and therefore could not be free to *act*, or *not act*, without a concomitant Liberty to *obey*, or *disobey*, that is, without being free at the same time to *Good* or *Evil*.

Neither does this Liberty imply any essential Weakness and Frailty in which Men were created. No: God created them strong and upright: Placed *eternal Life* and *eternal Death* before them: And, that they might enjoy the Former in their own Right by virtue of his Promise; he enter'd into a gracious Covenant with them; gave them a Free-Will to fulfil or break their part of the Covenant; and, to attract them to the Choice of the Former, he gave them a sufficient portion of Grace to determine their Free-Will. It was then the Perfection of infinit Mercy in God, when he decree'd the Creation of a Free-agent, to decree, from the same *eternal* Period, a sufficient

sufficient portion of Grace and Means to guide him to an advantageous Choice of the ample Happiness he was design'd for; and, as a double inducement to him to make use of that Grace and those Means, to decree an *Eternity* of Bliss to the proper application of them, and an *Eternity* of Torments to the abuse of them. And if Mankind, in defiance of that Mercy, will neither be enticed to *eternal* Happiness by *eternal* Promises, nor deterr'd from *eternal* Misery by *eternal* Threats; must God therefore be deem'd less *merciful* for being *just*? Or must he derogate from *eternal* Truth and Justice, to favour Criminals, who have voluntarily renounced all Mercy forever, by voluntarily persisting in Offences which *eternal* Truth has stamp'd with *eternal* Reprobation?

Yes, truly; if we believe the Declaimers against God's *eternal* Justice. "For, *say they*, the *Eternity* of Hell-Torments destroys itself by it's own strength; gives the Lye to the voice of universal Nature, of Conscience, and even of Common-Sense: All which unanimously conspire to bear witness to the infinit Goodness of God." --- But this is engaging with a Phantom. Where is the Wretch who denies the infinit Goodness of God? Or how does that infinit Goodness contradict the *Eternity* of Hell-Torments?

Why

“Why truly, *say they*, boundless Benignity, as that of God is, can never cease to do good to every Creature, as far as This is capable of receiving it.”

Very good! who denies all this? But must the sweet Effects of his Goodness therefore extend to those Wretches who are incapable of receiving it? Has it not already been clearly proved, that the *inflexibly Wicked* have voluntarily put themselves out of the reach of Mercy, by preferring the *eternal* Threats of *eternal* Misery, to the repeated Opportunities and Offers of infinit Happiness? And must the infinit Justice of God, which requires an *eternal* Satisfaction for an infinit Offence, never take place, but always submit to the infinit Malice of an Offender, who dares his Justice, and contemns his Mercy? Shocking illusion!

“But how then (*add they*) can the Divine Goodness be vindicated, in many instances, which are of a nature undeniably evil, and which we, to our own sad misfortune, feel; particularly his suffering Men to fall into that direful Condition, into which they precipitated soon after the Creation?”

This our Adversaries themselves answer, by refunding all in the unsearchable Goodness of God. And this Matter, they allow, may be placed in a Light, where it will be easy to see, that *Adam*, freely de-

viating from the Felicity he was placed in, could not but fall into Evil; and that, having done so, it was but right, Man's Condition should have a tincture of the Choice he had made. So that what we call Justice, and they call Severity, is but the natural Effect of the bad disposition Man has more or less freely contracted.

“ Now this issue, *say they*, could not be prevented, without inverting the Order of things, *that is, (as they certainly must mean)* MAN'S FREE-WILL. Whereas such an Inversion could not but have been inconsistent with the Divine Goodness, and might possibly have been a greater disadvantage to Mankind, than any thing they have now to complain of.”

Our Adversaries will, by no means, have it consistent with the Divine Goodness to invert the Order of Things, as far as it may relate to Man's Free-will; because they are Parties concern'd in it themselves, and are sensible what a miserable state they must be in, was that Order inverted, and Man divested of Liberty to Good and Evil. But, because they are loth to submit to the ill consequences of their abusing and misapplying that Free-will; they would fain have God give-up the infinit Satisfaction due to him for infinit Offences, however inconsistent it be for his Divine Goodness, to invert the Order of his Justice and Truth.

Truth. Such are the gross Inconsistencies attending on Error and Ignorance!

However, to remove this absurdity out of sight, they think it sufficient to say, that "What the Divine Goodness never fails in, is, the setting all Engines to work for repairing the damage Man has done himself."

This is strictly true; and so true that he spared not his only-begotten Son, but sacrificed him to the same ineffable purpose. Yet, as this was done without inverting the Order of Things, and consequently without the least infringement upon Man's Free-will; Man is still left at Liberty to make use of, or to reject, those Means of reparation as he pleases: And, in consequence of that Liberty, he may either merit, by Grace, the good effects of that Reparation; or must incur the *eternal* Punishments due to his obstinacy in resisting the Engines which God set to work for that Reparation: And it is inconsistent with the Order of God's Goodness and Justice, not to reward or punish him accordingly, for the one or the other.

But according to these false Reasoners, *the Reparation* which the Divine Goodness does, and must set all Engines to work for, is *nothing less than* A GENERAL RESTORATION OF ALL MANKIND. So that, according to them, Man must be absolutely

free to serve or slight his Maker; and the Almighty Maker, in virtue of his Promise, must be (as he is *eternal* Truth) under an absolute obligation of rewarding the Good with *eternal* Rewards for his Service, and (tho' he is infinit Truth) must be absolutely bound to make it up with the Wicked by a *General Restoration*; notwithstanding their having wilfully and obstinately offended him, in spite of his threatening them with *eternal* Torments. Is there any Consistency in this? Is there either Religion, Equity, or even Common-Sense in it? Is not this pulling God from his Throne to raise Man, wretched Man, to a more absolute state of Freedom than his Maker? Man must be infinitely rewarded for finite useless Services: God must not be infinitely satisfied for infinit Insults? Oh, how true is it, that *the tender Mercies of the Wicked are cruel!*

Yet the Sticklers against Divine Justice are not contented with stopping here: *One abyss calls-on another*; and they have no other refuge from the former Absurdity, than by running into a worse. They pretend to vindicate this self-contradicting Doctrin, by recurring to the Purpose of the Creator to render all Men happy. "This Intention of the Almighty, *say they*, it is certain, must some time take place: And since
 " it

“ it obviously does not in this Life; it evidently follows, that it's Accomplishment is reserved for that to come.”

I might answer this Objection, with observing, that the Wicked are generally happy in this Life: *They have already their Reward*, as our Saviour says: * And as their Wickedness intitles them to no farther Reward; they have no room to expect any Happiness in the next Life. But let us see to what length they carry their absurdity.

* St. Mat.
vi.

“ Truly, *they say*, Man being miserable from his very birth, and even in the Womb of his Mother; Goodness, or indeed Justice, requires that the Happiness he was made to enjoy, should infallibly be sometime his Portion. Nay, we may even presume, that boundless Goodness will make their transient State of Evil, an enhancement of their final Good: So that, by the experience of pain, they will be susceptible of more exquisite pleasure than they could have been without tasting of it.” Such are the preposterous Lengths to which Error leads a Man who is weak enough to be hood-wink'd by it! If this were the case, who would not chuse to be wicked? For, does not this System place the *Wicked* upon a much better footing than the most faithful of God's Servants? The Wicked are
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to engross all the Pleasure and Prosperity in this Life, as it is undeniable matter of fact that they generally do; they may rebel against the Laws of GOD, and their Reward is to be certain *transient* Torments, which shall enhance their *eternal* Felicity: While, on the contrary, the Good are to suffer all manner of Ills in this life, and when they have faithfully obey'd the Will of GOD, they are to be punish'd with a Degree of Happiness, inferior to that of the Wicked, for want of it's being enhanced by the like Torments, to those which the Wicked transiently suffer'd. I call the *transient* Torments of the Wicked a REWARD: For, in such case, they would be so, inasmuch as they would be the Means of enhancement of *eternal* Felicity; as the Felicity of the Good could not but be a PUNISHMENT, when compared to the greater Felicity they had unjustly lost. I say *unjustly*; for sure the *eternal* Felicity of the Good ought rather to receive an enhancement than That of the Wicked. Hence, I hope, it appears sufficiently, what a motley Attribute our Adversaries endeavour to make the Divine Goodness, by excluding from it the essential Considerations of his Justice and Truth. How absurd then must this Notion of GOD's Goodness appear, and how opposit to that of
David,

David, when he cry'd out: *Unto thee, O Lord, belongeth Mercy; FOR thou render'st to every Man according to his Works.*

But, to answer this Objection more directly, let us recall their own Principles. *The Purpose of the Creator, to render all Men happy, could not tend to invert the order of Things:* That being, according to their own System, *inconsistent with Divine Goodness.* As therefore this Purpose of God no ways infringes upon Man's *Free-will*; Man could not be made happy without being *willing* to be so. God's Purpose therefore of making all Men happy by their *Free-will*, leaves them perfectly free to be happy if they will; but cannot force them to be so, without inverting the Order of Things. And therefore God's Purpose of making *Free-Agents* happy, is no ways frustrated by some *Free-Agents* never being happy: Because it was equally his Purpose that they should be free to be happy or miserable, as they pleased. So that his Intention always takes place in this World as well as in the next: Inasmuch as he intended, that, if they persevered in willing to be happy, they should be so *eternally*; and if they inflexibly will'd to be miserable, they should *eternally* be so.

But to extricate themselves from this invincible Chain of Truths, they ask;
 "Would it not be worthier of Immense
 "Goodness, to exempt Man from all man-
 "ner

"ner of Punishment after this life; since
 "he was form'd for Bliss?"

Here they attempt to answer themselves.

"All the Perplexity of this Argument,
 "say they, arises from the Narrowness of
 "our own Understandings. It amounts to
 "this: Why did God make Man a Free-
 "Agent? for a confined Liberty; is no
 "Liberty."

And may not this Answer be retorted
 on themselves? Would it not be worthier
 of Immense Goodness, not to suffer Man
 to be eternally miserable, who was form'd
 for *eternal* Bliss? No, it would not. Why
 did God make Man a Free-Agent, but
 that he might be compleatly happy to all
Eternity, by meriting so to be? And to do
 this, must he not be free to do Works
 worthy *eternal* Life? But how could he be
 free to do the Good commanded, with-
 out being free to deviate from it, and so
 do evil? *For a confined Liberty is no Li-*
berty. And is not the Consequence plain,
 that, if Man, making use of his Free-will
 to obey the Will of God, merits, in virtue
 of this Divine Promise, *eternal* Felicity;
 he should, in like manner, deserve *eternal*
 Misery, in virtue of this Divine Threat, when
 he wilfully persists in disobeying him?

But the Sticklers against the *Eternity* of
 Hell-Torments, think to elude the strength
 of these Truths, by quibbling about the
 Terms

Terms those Threats are exprest in. " The
" Terms NEVER, EVER, EVERLASTING,
" ETERNAL, say they, are plainly equi-
" vocal, of various Significations, and fre-
" quently denote no more than a very long
" or indeterminate Duration."

This is very true : But what then ?

" Why there is no Necessity therefore,
say these wise Reasoners, from their ge-
" nuin Import, to take them in a rigid
" and unlimited Acceptation, in those places
" where they are made use of to figure out
" the Punishments of the Wicked."

Let us then see what Appearance of Reason there is for so voluntary and bold an assertion.

In the *first* place then, I answer, that the Doctrin of the *Eternity* of Hell-Torments, is not merely built upon these and the like Terms in Holy-Writ, but on the necessary Connection of Justice and Truth, with Mercy in God ; on the Infinity of his Nature, of Man's Malice, of the Satisfaction due to the Former from the Latter ; and on the Insufficiency of Man to pay that infinit Satisfaction by any other Means after death, than by the infinit Duration of that Satisfaction : All which demonstrably prove the Necessity of Hell-Torments being *eternal*. Wherefore, whether those Terms be equivocal or univocal : Whether they had been

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in Holy Writ or not; it would still be unalterably true, that the infinit Malice of the Wicked against an Infinit Being, must be atoned for by a Satisfaction infinit in point of Duration, when the finite Nature of the Offender would not admit of a Satisfaction infinit in the Bulk, which is the case of the Wicked after Death.

In the *next* place, tho', where the Sacred Scripture speaks of Things in their nature temporal, and of Transactions of this life, the Terms NEVER, EVER, EVER-LASTING, ETERNAL, *and the like*, are, and must be taken in a less rigorous Sense than the natural Import of them implies, and can mean no more than *a very long, or indeterminate Duration*; because *Eternity* cannot be brought within the compass of Time: Yet, with regard to the future Punishments of the Wicked, they can be taken in no other than the rigorous and natural Sense of them. For this reason, the chief Torments of the Wicked will not begin to the end of the World; when their Bodies and Souls shall be united, to partake the Reward they jointly contributed to deserve. *In the end of the World*, says Christ, * *The Angels shall --- sever the Wicked from among the Just*. In the Day of Judgment, THE LAST DAY, when *time shall be no more*, Christ tells us, † that he

* Mat.
xiii.

† Mat.
xviii.

he will say to the Wicked: *Go ye cursed, into EVERLASTING Fire.* What other Sense then can *everlasting* be here taken in, than the rigorous and natural one. Can *everlasting* mean no more than a very long and indeterminate Duration, when spoken at a Period when Time is at an end, and on the point of being absorb'd in Eternity, *in the twinkling of an Eye?*

Besides----is not this confessedly the *Last* Judgment? How then can the *everlasting* Torments, the Criminals are condemn'd to, be revoked by any Judgment posterior to it? Can the *Last* Sentence suffer an Appeal? If so; it is the *last* and not the *last*: An absurdity too great to need any Confutation. The hapless Wretches are entering upon the verge of *Eternity*, loaded with their Sentence of *everlasting* Misery; and Time, in the instant of it's destruction: What other Duration then have they to expect their Miseries to be measured by, than that of *Eternity*? Whither can they appeal from the *last* Sentence, to be past upon them? Or, how can their *everlasting* Misery be revoked, without a fresh Sentence, which, after the LAST, there is no room for?

Again, St JOHN, * tells us, that the De- * *Revel.*
vil, the Beast, and the false Prophet, shall^{xx.}
be tormented in the Lake of Fire and

Brimstone *for-ever and ever*. And the very same Expression he makes use of in the last Chapter to express the Duration of the Felicity of the Good: They shall reign *for-ever and ever*. St. JOHN makes no difference between the Duration of the *Felicity* of the *Good*, and the Misery of the *Wicked*. The Expressions are equally strong, nay, the very same; and can be wrested to no other than the rigorous and natural Sense of them. From all which it evidently appears, that the *abovemention'd Terms must be taken in their rigid and unlimited Acceptation in those places, where they are made use of to figure out the future Punishments of the Wicked.* *

Still do these Enemies to Divine Justice and Truth (unwilling barefacedly to deny the invincible Evidence of Sacred Scripture) attempt to wrest God's Word to their own Purpose, and pretend to produce many Texts capable of destroying the genuin Sense of those we have alledged.

†Chap. iii. v. 21. “ *First, our Saviour Christ is said, in the ACTS of the Apostles, † to come to restore all things. Then, say they, a general Restoration of All, both Good, and Wicked, must and will be brought about.*”

* See the Preface, p. xii. for a farther Answer to this Objection.

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This I have already answer'd in what I have said to the Allegation of God's creating *All* to be happy. For tho' Christ *came to restore ALL*; let it still be remember'd, that he came not to invert the Order of Things, nor, consequently, to destroy Man's Free-will: And therefore, tho' his general Design and End was the Restoration of *All*; yet it was to be a Restoration of Free-Agents, and in course must include a Liberty in those Free-Agents to benefit by this Restoration or not. And thus his Intention is no ways frustrated by such as reject his Restoration.

" But St. PAUL expressly says: * As in ^{* 1 Cor. xv. v. 22.}
 " *Adam ALL* die, even so in Christ shall
 " *ALL* be made alive. Therefore, *say our*
 " *Adversaries*, as it is past all dispute, that
 " in *Adam ALL* die; it is no less certain,
 " that in Christ *ALL* shall be made alive."

But is it not plain, from the very Words themselves, that the Apostle here compares not only the Means, but the Manner of using them? How did *ALL* die in *Adam*, but by the Abuse of Free-will? And can *ALL* be made alive in Christ in any other manner than by a right use of that Free-will? The Words of St. PAUL then import no more than, that, as *ALL*, by Free-will, died in *Adam*, their Wills being eminently contain'd in his; so, even so (says the

the Apostle) *that is*, in the same manner, shall ALL be made alive in Christ by their Free-will. But dare our Adversaries advance, that Christ came to force Men to Life against their Will? Or dare they say, that it is consistent with his infinit Justice and Truth, or consequently, with his Mercy, to redeem to Life Such as inflexibly persist in rejecting his Redemption and Mediation?

* *Ibid.* ver. 26. “ But (*say our Adversaries*) the Words of the Apostle * are a strong confirmation of this (*pretended*) Restoration: THE LAST ENEMY THAT SHALL BE DESTROY'D IS DEATH. Is the Separation of the Soul from the Body the Death here design'd? No (*say they*) for after the coming of Christ, there shall be no more room for That.”

A pretty Reason to be assign'd by Men in their Senses! Because, after Christ's Coming, which is the end of Time, there shall be no more room for the Separation of the Soul from the Body; therefore that Separation cannot be the last Enemy destroy'd!

To give a stronger Instance of their Wisdom, or rather Weakness, these Sticklers for a general Restoration, alledge a farther proof of the Death here mention'd not being temporal: “ Which is (*say they*) that the inspired Writer ranks it among
“ the

“ the Enemies of GOD: Whereas tempo-
“ ral Death is really his Servant.”

But let me ask these Sophisters: Whether the Death of the Son of GOD could be call'd a Friendship done him? And is not the Separation of Soul and Body still an Enemy to GOD, while it debars his beloved Elect of the full Enjoyment of the Bliss they are destin'd to? True indeed it is, that Death is his Servant, employ'd in executing his Orders: So is the Devil. But is Either less opposit to the final End of his Goodness? What egregious Trifling then are our Adversaries compell'd to have recourse to!

The 54th. Verse is a plain Confutation of their Mis-construction of this Text: Where the Apostle expressly says: *When this Mortal shall have put on Immortality; then shall be brought to pass the Saying which is written: DEATH SHALL BE SWALLOW'D UP IN VICTORY.* Here the Apostle in plain terms tells us that, when Immortality shall render the Soul and Body inseparable; then Death, *that is*, that Separation of Soul and Body shall cease. Yet these confident Triflers are not ashamed to quote this very Verse to prove that St. Paul does not mean by Death the Separation of Soul and Body. Was a Child to reason in this manner; our Adversaries themselves would

would think a Rod more proper than Arguments to confute him.

Nevertheless they lay great stress on the Exclamation of St. PAUL: Oh Death! where is thy Sting! Oh grave! where is thy Victory? " If Death and the Grave, (*say they*) have no other Sting than Sin, and " this Sting must be destroy'd; does it not " thence follow, that Hell, which depends " altogether upon it, must be destroy'd " also?" Who told our Adversaries that Sin will be destroy'd? --- Not the Apostle. He only asks a question, which he himself has solved. Sin is pass'd into immortal Subjects; who, before were mortal, but now are immortalized, and their Sin with them. Death consequently has lost it's Sting in Immortality, and therefore must cease. But does it therefore follow that Sin must also? No, on the contrary: Sin is the perpetual *Worm* of the Wicked, which shall never die in their inflexible Hearts: But when It is separated by a State of Immortality from natural Death; that Death itself must die, and have no more dominion over them. Well then might the Apostle cry out: *Oh Death! where is thy Sting?*

Thus far I have answer'd these mistaken Advocates for unjust Mercy, according to their own Sense of the Apostle's words. But if they will allow us the Liberty of understanding

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understanding *Death*, in a something more than literal Sense, as it is a Separation of the Man from God, the fountain of all Life, and not a meer Separation of Soul and Body; it must be own'd, that the unhappy Objects of Divine Wrath are eternally subject to a *second* more (oh infinitely more!) dreadful *Death*, the Sting of which they must and will *perpetually* feel. However, as this does not seem to be the Apostle's Meaning in the passage in question, where he is manifestly talking of *temporal Death*, the *only Death which could lose it's STING*, and *which* he tells us receiv'd it's STING, *that is*, all it's Power, from SIN; it is plain, that the Apostle's Sense must be That in which the soundest part of Divines and Interpreters have understood him; and that he is speaking with reference to those thrice happy Saints, who triumph over Death by a glorious Resurrection to immortal Felicity. Neither can St. Paul's words be naturally applied to any other Sense, as appears from what immediately precedes: *Death is swallow'd up in VICTORY*: Which is strictly true in those Blessed Souls; since in them *Death* absolutely loses it's STING, *that is*, all the power it received from SIN; *that is*, in a word, the power of separating their Bodies and Souls, and keeping them from their

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ultimate perfect Union in God. But what does all this infer against the *Eternity of Hell-Torments?*

Yet St. PAUL is farther quoted in the
 Ver. 20. *First* to the *Colossians*, * “Where he declares the good pleasure of God, say they, in sending his Son into the World, to be, that by him he might reconcile ALL things to himself.”

But was This to be done by inverting the Order of Things, or by any Infringement on Man's Free-will? No. . . . This our Adversaries own to be inconsistent with Divine Goodness; And therefore I shall content myself with the Answer I have already given to the like kind of Argument.

“But the same Apostle, in the same Chapter, calls Christ, the *First-born of every Creature, that in all things he might have the Pre-eminence*”

Very true: And is he not? No one denies him to have the same sovereign Pre-eminence over the Powers of Hell, as over the Good, and the Powers of Heaven. What then? Must the Wicked therefore be restored, whether they will or not?

“Yes, say our Triflers: Because in the xvith. Verse it is said, that *all things that were made by him, were also created for him.*”

This

of the T O R M E N T S of H E L L.

This is undoubted Truth, but no ways concludes for our Adversaries; unless they can prove that Christ is not glorified in his Justice to the Wicked, as well as in his Bounty to the Good, which they will find a difficult Task to engage in. Christ, as I have already said, created ALL for his Glory: And, whether, by their free Choice, they become eternally happy, or eternally wretched; as he provided ALL with Means to enjoy Felicity, he is equally to be glorified: Inasmuch as unto him *belongeth Mercy*; for he renders to every Man according to his Work.

It is again urged: "Christ is the First Fruits of the Creation: Now if the First Fruits be holy; the Lump also is holy: And if the Root be holy; so are the Branches." *

* Rom. xii

I heartily wish these fond Quoters of St. Paul would be fair in their Quotations. If they were, they would quote the whole Sense of him, and not stifle what destroys the Tenet they mean to support. St. Paul here talks of the Bulk and Branches while they continue in the same Perfection with the First Fruits. But then he expressly tells us, that some Branches are cut-off. Well, says the Apostle, because of Unbelief they were broken-off: But thou standest by Faith. Be not high-minded, but fear: For if God

spared not the natural Branches; take heed, lest he also spare not thee. Behold therefore the Goodness and Severity of God: On them which fell, Severity; but towards the Goodness, if thou continue in his Goodness. What is there in all this Text to favour a general Restoration of the Wicked? St. Paul tells us that Christ, the First Fruit, is holy, and the Bulk and Branches are the same, while they are like him. But then he tells us that there are many Branches, which, for want of that Likeness, are cut off: He tells us (Gentiles) that we are ingrafted in their place; and while we persist in a Likeness to him, we shall partake of his Holiness: But bids us beware not to imitate those perverse natural Branches, the Jews, who were cut-off thro' Unbelief. For that God is good, but then he is just too: And that to them, who use their Free-will to fall, he deals Severity; as he does Goodness to them, who are free to persevere. Indeed, he afterwards tells us, that the Jews, if they abide not in their Unbelief, shall be grafted-in again: But they are left to their Free-will to be ingrafted, or not; and if they reject it, must they not be cut-off for-ever?

*"No, say our Adversaries. Christ ask'd
 "all the Ends of the Earth for his Inheri-
 "tance; * and why, but to reconcile them
 "to GOD?"*

* Psalm ii.

But

But let me ask them in turn: Did Christ ask to reconcile Free-Agents with prejudice to their Freedom? "No (*they must answer me*): This is inconsistent, with "Divine Goodness." Then they are already answer'd. For if Free-Agents, whom he pray'd and strove to reconcile, inflexibly withstand his reconciling Mediation; can He, in justice, or mercy, force them to Reconciliation? Such weak Refuges are our Adversaries reduced to!

Yet these Disfigurers of God's Justice, Truth, and Mercy think they have another strong Hold to retire to, in the 5th. to the ROMANS: "Where (*say they*) the "Words of the Apostle are very clear: "As, by one Man's Disobedience, Many "were made Sinners; so, by the Obedience of one Man, Many were made "Righteous. The Word MANY, in this "place (*continue they*) undoubtedly comprehends all Mankind. ALL were made "Sinners by Adam: Therefore ALL ought "to be made righteous by Jesus Christ."

To this I answer, *first*, that it is false that ALL were made Sinners by Adam, for Christ himself was not: *Secondly*, ALL are not to be made Righteous in a different manner than they were made Sinners. Wherefore, as they were not made Sinners with prejudice to their Free-will; they are

are not to be made righteous unless they please: And, consequently, as it is too sadly true, that Many have not made use of their Free-will to be made righteous by him; it is sadly as true, that *Many* will not be made righteous by his Obedience. MANY then cannot stand here for ALL *Mankind*. And tho' all do not become Righteous; Christ's good Intention is not thereby frustrated: As he intended not to invert the Order of things, or force the Free-agency of Man. Nor will it be to their purpose to urge what the Apostle adds in the same Chapter, that *where Sin abounded, Grace did much more abound*. For by This he meant no more than to display the Riches and Strength of God's Grace, in opposition to the Poverty and Weakness of Man's Free-will. Man's Will yielded, and let Sin abound, notwithstanding that he met with no Resistance, but what he had power to conquer: Whereas the more abundant Grace of Christ conquer'd the Heart of Man, notwithstanding the Resistance of his Free-will, *by moving him, as St. Augustin says somewhere, to do willingly what he had a Free-will to do*.

Thus far I have answer'd, I hope, to the satisfaction of all unprejudiced Minds, the most material Objections, which are,
of

or can be, brought against the *Eternity* of Hell-Torments; and exploded the false and dangerous Doctrin of a general Restoration. Heaven forbid I should be so cruel to conceive any pleasure in the Reflection on the endless Torments of my Fellow-creatures. No. Could I, without injuring the Justice, Truth, and Mercy of my Divine Maker, change their *eternal* Punishment into a temporal one; I should be as willing to do as the most (pretendly) compassionate of my Adversaries. But must the Divine Attributes be reason'd away, to make room for unmerited, unaccepted, nay rejected Compassion? Or will the asserting the Torments of Hell to be only temporal suffice to make them so?

God has expressly acquainted us, that, when he takes away the Impenitent with his Stroke, a great Ransom cannot deliver them; --- that he will judge them by the Number of his Years, *that is*, by his *Eternity*; --- that the Portion of their Cup shall be Fire and Brimstone; an *everlasting* Lake of Fire and Brimstone, which shall torment them *for-ever and ever*; --- that he will take them off into it, in a whirlwind, living in his Wrath, and as living as his Wrath, and the Fire kindled therein: And lest in our infirmity we should, with *David*, reflect on his Mercy in so doing, he warns

warns us not to lay too great a stress on his Mercy alone, for that it is inseparable from his Justice and Truth. For tho' he is *slow to Anger, and plenteous in Mercy*; yet *his Truth endureth to all Generations*, and Both shall go inseparably before his face: Inasmuch as he is ever, and in all respects, a just God, as well as a Saviour, and a false Balance is as great an abomination to him, as a just Weight is his Delight. We are assured, that in the Last Day, when Time shall cease, and Eternity, fathomless Eternity, take place; he will come to judge the Good and Bad: That the Former shall rise to the Resurrection of Life, the Latter to the Resurrection of Damnation: And that his Judgment will be just, when he shall say to the FormerCome, ye Blessed, &c; and to the Latter:.....Go, ye Cursed, into everlasting Fire. A dreadful Sentence this, and so much the more so, as it will be the last Sentence, which consequently can admit of no Appeal. Yet, all dreadful as it is, is not God to be glorified in it for the Equity of his Judgment? Yes, surely he is, and for his Mercy too.

What

What (at once) more equitable and merciful, than to render to Every-One according to his Work? God most liberally, without any interest to himself, created Men Free-Agents, that they might be Sharers in his *eternal* Felicity, and enjoy Happiness in their own Right, by purchasing it of God. And to help them forward to this End, enter'd into a gracious Covenant with them, in virtue of which they might become entitled to the Bliss they were created for. And to induce them to fulfil their part of the Covenant, and thereby lay his Divine Goodness under an ineffable Tie of Mercy and Justice to fulfil his part, he promised *eternal* Joy to their Obedience, and threaten'd their Disobedience with *eternal* Woe: Adding a sufficient portion of grace and means to win and allure this Free-will to the better Choice, and to wean it from preferring present precarious empty fleeting Pleasures to future certain solid and never ending Joys. What more could a just God do? And what less could he do as a merciful One, than leave the Free-will of Man, whom he had thus strengthen'd, uncontroul'd in it's Choice? If then, after all this, Man inflexibly persists in preferring *eternal* Wretchedness to *eternal* Happiness; is it not equally merciful to sentence him to

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what he prefers? But how much brighter still does this Mercy appear; when we see the Divine Bounty affording him fresh Means of revoking his Choice, by sacrificing his only Son, and offering to accept his Blood, as a Mediation and Attonement for the former Obstinacy of Man in rejecting the Grace and Means to Salvation; which he might have made use of but rejected? What shall we say, when we see man obstinately bent to refuse this ineffable Condescension? We must own, that his Malice and Perversity is an infinit Insult to the infinit Goodness of God, and that God shews himself a merciful Being in not controuling the obstinate Wretch; and shews himself a just One in requiring the infinit Satisfaction due for the infinit Insult committed against him. And since that infinit Satisfaction can be paid no other way than by infinit Duration; the consequence will be, that it behoves God, as a just and merciful Being, to decree the Offender those *eternal* Torments he has been pleased inflexibly to make choice of.

All the Arguments brought to prove the contrary, tend only to destroy Justice and Truth in God, or Free-will in Man: Both which being more than visible Absurdities, carry their own confutation with them. And the Texts of Scripture wrested against
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the orthodox Doctrin of the *Eternity of Hell-Torments*, are such as only serve to confirm the Belief of it: They tend on one hand to justify the Divine Mercy in inflicting them, by pointing out the *Patience of God*, and the *Riches of his Goodness*, which leads the Wicked to *Repentance*, by *Forbearance*, *Long-suffering*, and offering them efficacious Means of *Reconciliation*; and, on the other hand, render the *Wicked inexcusable in despising the Riches of his Goodness* and, after their *Hardness and impenitent Hearts*, *treasuring-up to themselves Wrath unto the day of Wrath and Revelation of the righteous Judgment of God*, who will render to every Man according to his Deeds.

And now, I presume, I have fully demonstrated the Necessity of admitting the *Eternity of Hell-Torments* to be perfectly conformable, not only with the Justice and Truth, but even with the Mercy of God; and have proved the Consistency of this Doctrin by *Revelation* from Scripture, according to the evident Import of it's Words and the Sense in which the Fathers have understood them; by *Right Reason*, from the Nature of the *Infini Offended*, of the *finite Offender*, and of the *infini Satisfaction* due to the *Former* from the *Latter*; and finally, by the very Objections which our Adversaries make against it.

How long then, O misguided Triflers, will ye persist in your error? How long will ye shut the eyes of your Understanding to the full-beaming Rays of God's ineffable Truth? And how long will ye be *cruel* in the *false Tenderness* of your Mercies? Or say CHRISTIANS! Will you suffer the Reasonableness of your Faith to give way to the Quibbles and Absurdities of these Enemies to Truth and Reason? Can you answer it to your own Consciences, to join such a feeble Troop in the attempt of pulling God from his Throne of Judgment and Justice, to set-up the Powers of Vice in his stead, and give Wickedness, Rebellion and Anarchy a more extensive and resistless dominion? No, rather let us glorify God in all his ways: Let us acknowledge the insufficiency of our Understandings, to fathom his unsearchable Mysteries: And, if hitherto we have conceived any Notions unworthy so adorable a Being; let us confess our Infirmary with *David*. With him, let us praise and magnify thee, and gratefully own, that *Unto thee, O Lord, belongeth Mercy; FOR thou renderest to Every-One according to his Work.*

WHAT then, Christians, remains for us to do, but seriously to weigh the Consequences flowing from these infallible Truths? The

The Horror, with which you ought to look down on the Miseries of a future unhappy State, sufficiently appears from the extraordinary pains which evil Men take in attempting to argue away the *Eternity* of them. Why all this labour to disprove the *Eternity* of Hell-Torments? Can it arise from any other source than a corroding Consciousness of deserving them? When a Man, in any pursuit, is in danger of what he cannot conceive without dread and dismay; if he will continue his Career, he has but one of these two means to have recourse to: Either to remove the Danger, or to lessen his Fears. Hence, when a Man, in the search of Pleasures forbidden by his Maker, reflects on the Terrors of a future State consequential to his lawless pursuit; what has he to do, but either to remove the Danger by relinquishing that pursuit, or to lull his Fears by lessening the idea of the Object which creates them? Thus *Wicked Men*, who are inflexibly bent on their Pleasures, will not make choice of the former, and therefore must have recourse to the latter. Punishments, they are sure, will, one day, be their portion; and very severe ones. The Voice of Guilt, loudly sounding in their Conscience with perpetual dins, leaves them no room to doubt of it. But then those
Punishments

Punishments are future ones, of an undetermin'd nature; and are not so obvious to their Senses as the present Pleasures they have in view; and therefore not so striking. What then have they to do? Relinquish their Pursuit and remove the Danger they will not: Pursue their Pleasures while the Terrors of such and so certain Punishments stare them in the face, they cannot: This Terror therefore is to be destroy'd, by changing the Idea of it's Object. While they look upon the Miseries they fear as *eternal, everlasting and without End*; their Reason, however corrupt, tells them, that fleeting Pleasures cannot be worth pursuing at the expence of *eternal* Wretchedness: And as the Will cannot embrace any Object, nor come to any Choice without direction from the Mind, they are kept in suspense between the inflexibly fancied Good and the dreaded Evil. But as soon as the terrifying Consideration of *Eternity* is removed from the Idea of those Miseries; the Terror vanishes along with it: Fleeting Miseries are not strong enough to deter them from the pursuit of fleeting Pleasures: These are present; determin'd and striking: Those but future, undetermin'd and unable to strike the Senses, because not obvious to them: And therefore, that the Will, irrevocably bent on
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the violation of God's Laws, in the pursuit of forbidden Pleasures, in spite of all his Promises and Threats, may not be stopt in it's Career; corrupt Reason is call'd in to it's aid, in order to remove every Idea of the *Eternity* of, *Hell-Torments* in favour of Vice.

Such are the wretched Grounds on which are raised the Batteries against the *Eternity* of *Hell-Torments*. But, alas, how indiscreetly do the Wicked act! Since the *Eternity* of these Torments is so horrible to them to conceive; why will they not rather destroy both the miserable *Eternity* and the Miseries of it, by destroying in themselves that Wickedness which may otherwise be the Cause of both? Must they not be obliged to own this a more effectual and a surer way of doing it, than by barely attempting to destroy the Belief of it? Whether those Torments are to be *eternal* or not; sure they are, that they will be proportion'd to their Crimes, and inexpressibly greater than the Pleasure those Crimes are capable of giving. But if they should be, as it evidently appears they must be, *eternal*; how wretched will not their Case be; when sad Experience shall, with feeling, dreadfully feeling Demonstration, convince them of their Error! How will not they then wish, and wish in vain, that
they

they had not suffer'd their Minds to be beguiled by the corruption of their Hearts! And how, alas, will they curse the time when they deluded themselves and others, by attempting to disprove the *Eternity* of those Torments which irrevocable, immutable, *eternal* Justice forces them (but ah too late!) to own and feel without Remedy, without Measure, and without End! What will Quibbles then avail them? Will they serve to remove their Miseries or revoke their Sentence? No, they will only serve to redouble their Wretchedness, by adding to it the society of Others, whom their Illusions shall contribute to make as wretched as themselves.

Notwithstanding the universal Belief of all Ages Nations and Religions in the *Eternity* of Miseries allotted to the Wicked; some Men are so irrevocably bent on Vice, as not to be thereby deterr'd from committing Evil. How much wider then will not Wickedness spread it's dominion; should the dangerous daring Doctrin prevail, which asserts those Miseries not to be *eternal*? Some indeed there are, it is to be hoped, virtuous enough to pursue the dictates of Conscience and Religion independently on any Fears of *eternal* Torments, spirited by a more generous Love and Gratitude to their Maker and Redeemer.

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But how many more are not there among the degenerate race of Mankind, whom nothing less than an *Eternity* of Punishments will deter from offending him? They, whom an *Eternity* of Torments will not restrain from committing some Insults against God, would refrain from none, were those Torments to be changed into *temporal*. And those whom nothing but *eternal* Misery can keep in order, how shall *temporal* punishment render subject to God's Laws? What an endless Multiplication of Sins and Sinners must necessarily ensue then; should the scandalous System of a general Restoration in defiance of eternal Truth and Justice obtain credit?

But surely, O beloved Fellow-Creatures, you will shew yourselves more worthy of that Grace, that Reason, and that Good-Sense, with which Heaven has endow'd you, than to subject it to Absurdity? Surely, O CHRISTIANS, you will shew yourselves more grateful to your God than to rob him of his Power, to bestow it on Vice? Shall the Almighty Creator have made Man out of nothing, to be *eternally* happy; and not have a right to punish him infinitely for infinitely insulting, instead of serving, him? CHRISTIANS! If you have any sense of Gratitude in you; you will not allow that a Worm, a Reptil, a No-

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thing,

thing, shall dare to insult this Infinit Being, without deserving an infinit Punishment. Shall you, in return for his having made you what you are, attempt to make him less than what he is? Shall you, to screen a rebellious Insect from the infinit Punishment he deserves for the infinit Insult he has inflexibly persisted-in against his Maker, divest GOD of that immutable Truth and Justice which are inseparable from his Mercy? Heavens forbid! The Littleness and Contemptibility of the Offender, rather enhance than excuse the Guilt of his Offence. So much the more diminutive the Person who dares offend this Infinit Being, and so much the more dependent he is on this Being; so much the greater Malice, Arrogance and Guilt that Littleness argues in the Offender. For, however frail he be by Nature; GOD has provided him with sufficient Means to raise him above the frailty of Nature. This then is more than sufficient to render every Criminal inexcusable, who inflexibly persists in offending him; and to vindicate the Divine Mercy from every shadow of Cruelty in punishing with *eternal* Torments the infinit Malice of Crimes, committed in defiance of his Grace. Ah let us never therefore presume to harbour the least Thought of siding with such malicious

cious Offenders against so lenitive a Judge. No: Rather let us praise and glorify this equitable merciful Judge as well in the *eternal Torments* he inflicts on the *Wicked*, as in the *never-ending Felicity* he bestows on the *Good*. Yes, we will: O just and gracious God. We will magnify thee in thy Deeds without ceasing: We will give thee Glory Praise and Thanks without Measure: And will own aloud, that *Unto thee, O Lord, belongeth Mercy: FOR thou renderest to every Man according to his Work.*



The following are the names of the persons who have been appointed as members of the Board of Directors of the National Association of Manufacturers:

Mr. J. B. Connelley, President
Mr. C. F. Johnson, Vice-President
Mr. W. H. Lusk, Secretary
Mr. E. A. Tamm, Treasurer

The Board of Directors will meet at the Hotel New York, New York, on Monday, January 1st, 1906.

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A P P E N D I X
TO THE
S E R M O N S
FOR EVERY
SUNDAY in the YEAR.

Containing Some
A V U L S E S E R M O N S.

By the same A U T H O R.



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Printed in the YEAR M D C C X L V.



THE
P A S S I O N
OF OUR
L O R D and SAVIOUR
J E S U S C H R I S T:
A S E R M O N
O N
G O O D - F R I D A Y.

Preach'd (with some little variation of
Words) in the Year 1738, and every
Year since; This present one included.

THE SECOND EDITION.

L O N D O N:
Printed in the Year, MDCCXLV.

THE
PASSION

OF OUR

LORD AND SAVIOUR

JESUS CHRIST

A SERMON



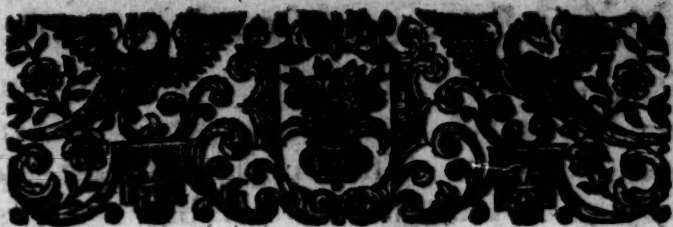
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LONDON:

Printed in the Year MDCCLXXV.



S E R M O N
ON
G O O D - F R I D A Y.



*In the Name of the FATHER,
And of the SON,
And of the HOLY - GHOST.*



UT! Where is the SON? ---
The eternal Father had a Son;
a dear, an only, Son: This
to our joy we know. For in
this bath the Charity of GOD
appear'd among us, that he sent down
his only begotten Son into the World, that
*we may live by him. * What then be-*
came of this GOD's dear, GOD's only Son?
--- Alas, Christians! He lay'd down his
precious Life, that Life so necessary for us

* 1 S JOHN
iv. 1.

to live by: In short, he was assassinated.
 ---The Son of God assassinated? Stupen-
 dous Paradox! The Author of our life,
 deceased! Can it be possible? --- Yes;
 witness, celestial Regions! Earth and Hell!
 Do ye bear witness, that the Author of
 our Beings, to rescue from eternal Woe
 our Life, lay'd down his own. Too well;
 too well, to your Sorrow, do ye know it;
 For *now is the Judgment of the World;*
 (of thee, oh Earth!) *Now shall the Prince*
of this World (even Thou, oh *Lucifer!*)
be cast forth. * --- Unheard-of Mystery!
 But when did this Sovereign Source of life
 dry-up? When did this our soul-creating
 Breath depart? --- At the ninth hour. ---
 For whom did he part with a life so pre-
 cious? --- Ah! for us his useless Creatures;
 for us poor, worthless, vile, enormous
 (and to say all in one) ungrateful Sinners.
 --- How then did he part with that dear
 invaluable Life? --- Inhumanly mangled
 on a shameful Cross. --- Oh Abyss of un-
 investigable Mysteries! Who and what was
 this mangled Author of our Lives? ---
 Already I have told you: The eternal Son
 of an eternal Father, the spotless Lamb of
 God; his Self both perfect God and per-
 fect Man. --- Heavens! What Monsters
 then were his Executioners? --- Our ini-
 quities. --- Was there no Cause then in
 him, for which he was condemn'd to
 Slaughter?

* SJOHN.
 xii. 31.

Slaughter?----Yes.----Altho' his Enemies had none to alledge; altho' the very Judge who sentenced him could find none in him; the Cause was obvious. His spotless Innocence and ardent Love for us, were the unpardonable Crimes which render'd him obnoxious to the World.----Horror! keep back: Too early do'st Thou rush upon us. Say: how was this sacrilegious Slaughter, this daring Deicide, effected?----Ah Heavens! what shall I answer? Where shall I find the faculty of Speech, while I contemplate how the eternal Word once lost the use of his.

Yet, Brethren, speak I must and will, whatever Struggles it may cost me, to tell you how your gracious God and mine was butcher'd. This is the melancholy Tale I have so often invited you to hear and promised to relate. To-day the Honour of the injured Deity demands it of me: To-day the Piety of your impatience calls for it: To-day the same zealous Wishes for your eternal Welfare, which heretofore prompted me to rouse your Expectation, bid me gratify it, in spite of all the Yearnings of a Breast brimful of woe. Oh Fortitude! be faithful at this juncture, when *the Waters* of a just Distress *have enter'd-in even to my Soul.* * Keep back the Flood of Pity pouring in upon me, that I may pass dry-eyed through this red Sea of Sorrows. Oh

* *Psalm:*
lxviii. 1.

P

Resolution!

Resolution! if ever thou was't needful to me, it is now; when I must view my God (and even shew him to these poor sympathizing Christians) expiring with excess of pain, yet not expire myself. Oh my sad heart! what wrongs has't thou ever done me, that I should thus resolve to lord it over thy too justified affliction, by forcing thee with more than Savage Cruelty, to stifle all thy tenderness and bleed in silent anguish? Must thou, in punishment of all thy past revolts, be now debarr'd the common privilege which every sinful breast but thine enjoys of drowning former guilt in present tears? While every part of Nature, else, is now indulged the harmless bent of feeding hungry grief with penitential groans; must thou, sole Tyrant over thy own Being, imprison all thy sorrows to set this tongue at liberty?

What can We behold (let me look round) which does not call aloud rather for tears than words. The Heavens in their way excite us to general Mourning: The Sun itself on this day cloath'd itself with the mantle of Gloom, in a solemn Eclipse: And all Nature seem'd wedded to Sorrow. The Soul of every thinking Christian overwhelm'd with Concern is still at liberty to vent that Concern in a Flood of Tribulation: And to warrant the silent Eloquence of all her Children's Tears, at
this

this holy Season the holy Church, my sacred weeping Mother, gives us to understand by her sad mute Solemnities that her eternal Spouse, her sole Beloved, breathed-out his lovely Soul upon a shameful Gibet, between a couple of Thieves; in sight of a tumultuous numerous Populace; amid'st all the outrages of a harden'd Band of blood-thirsty Butchers; reviled and scoff'd at and blasphemed by Men; and even seem'd by God himself forsaken. And yet my Function (oh cruel Function!) from the mid'st of my silenced fellow Mourners singles me out (as if alone flinted into insensibility) to add to their public Sadness (while suppressing the effects of my own) by distinctly and publickly proclaiming in the Ears of all,

THE PASSION OF OUR LORD
JESUS CHRIST.

To day the Voice of Gratitude, the universal Cry of sympathizing Nature, demands that all the mournful Murmurs which the deepest Woe can dictate, should wholly be devoted to the solemn Anguish of this our suffering injured Lord and Friend and Father and Redeemer: Else how might not the share I claim in his Distresses prompt me to resent this Tyrant Task my sacerdotal Character imposes on me, of trampling on all the soft emotions

of my Soul? For surely I am no less a Child, of that lamenting Spouse whose widow'd Love you, Brethren, are indulged the liberty of consoling, by joining in sighs with her to bewail this our common Loss? Surely I am no less the Purchase of this dear butcher'd Parent than you who are allow'd the leave to bedew his sacred Corse with your Tears? If I (as well as you are) am all over bloody with the Wounds, which our common Crimes have heap'd on this innocent Lamb from head to foot; why may not I share along with You, an equal Portion in the inebriating Chalice of his Passion? Why may not I *minge my Drink with my tears*, * with liquid pity, and to the precious Sea of Mercies flowing upon me from those Wounds, join the Torrent of Compunction swelling in my bosom? Why?----but that, while the dire Remembrance of my former Perfidy impels me to weep, the Office (*once more let me say*, oh cruel Office!) of Priest and Preacher compels me to speak,

* *Psalm.*
ci. 19.

If then there be among us one harden'd heart not even as yet disposed to melt with pity at poor JESUS's Distress; ah. may this Tongue become, like *Moses's Rod*, † the Means of forcing from that flinted Breast a Source of Waters! And you meanwhile, already melted Christians! even give entire Scope to your Compassion. You,
oh

† *Exodus*
xvii.
6.

oh Innocents! lament the Injuries done to the Author of your Grace: You, oh Guiltful! bewail your own Perverseness, which so injuriously misused him. Weep every One over him: Weep for yourselves; and, since I may not pay my Grief the Tribute of one present falling Tear; be you the Proxies of my Tenderness and kindly weep for me, *You may buy waters at free-cost.* * You are not brought to the melancholy Hardship of the *Jews of Babylon*, reduced to purchase the very Streams of their owns fountains at the price of gold. Neither are you (thank God!) in the same wretched necessity of paying Taxes for your Grief, as that rejected Nation was after the Destruction of *Jerusalem*: That *Jerusalem* which their own *Judaic* Perfidy more than the triumphant Arms of the *Romans*, made desolate. Just Judgment of insulted Heaven!----That an Enormity without example and a Deicide without Remorse might be punish'd with an Evil without remedy and a Rigour without mercy; the scatter'd Remains of those *Jews*, who escaped from the Flames of that once holy Place, were loaden by their Conquerors not only with Chains on their Limbs but even with Shackles on their Wishes, and forbidden under pain of Death to return at any time after to view, tho' from afar off, the ruinous Remains
of

* *Isaiah*
v. 1.

of their depopulated Country. However, whether it be that Ingratitude to God, by long repeated Practice, had become a Second Nature to them; or whether the strong Resemblance of marble to the inflexible obduracy of their hearts produced a predominance of Sympathy between the one and the others; they, whom no Endearments could excite to the Love of the Author of their Temple, could by no consideration of Grievances or Convenience be wean'd from the Affection they bore to the Temple itself. For as well after they became faithless, as while they remain'd faithful, *the very Stones of it pleased them*:

• PSALM.
ci. 15.

* And the Love of the noble Ruin still lived in the hearts of that reprov'd dejected People, descending from Father to Son: A painful inheritance of hungry Desires, never to be appeased but by feasting their eyes with the Sight of it. Hence were they at length reduced to the solitary Solace of purchasing, with an annual exorbitant Tribute, the Grant of going once a Year under a strong Guard to weep over the Dust of the dear-loved City on the day it had been destroy'd by *Vespasian's* Army. Thither then from every quarter, did they annually gather in melancholy Multitudes, on the fatal day to feed their despair with the dearly-purchased Aliment of a yearly renew'd Horror, in seeing their Property posselt

possest by Strangers, their Altars laid waste, their Temples over-thrown, their Sanctuary polluted, their Liberty lost, their Laws violated, their Mysteries abolish'd, and their Enemies riotously triumphant over their Father's Tombs. And as if Distress had been a desirable Good; how did not they hoar'd-up each precious instant of those few hours granted them, to spend it in sighs and sobs, and groans and tears and lamentations and grief! In so much that, when their Keepers, with the departing Sun, prepared to part them from the fondled Idol of their Affliction, it is hard to decide which were the most eager, the Russians in exacting, or they in lavishing, immoderate Sums of Money for every minute's Leisure of lamenting beyond the stated time. Equitable Retaliation of Vengeance on a Generation so base as for the favour of one *Cesar*, to sell the real Joy of the rest of Mankind; that by another *Cesar* (not unprovidentially surnamed the delight of human Nature) they should be reduced to purchase at an extravagant price the very liberty of venting their own Sorrows; and thus literally fulfill the Prophetic Sense of *Jeremiah's* Complaint: * *Our own Water* (the very Water of our Tears) *we have drank for money.*

* *La-*
MENT. V.
v. 4.

Oh Beloved Faithful: This, This Day is the mournful Anniversary of that too fatal Period,

The PASSION of our LORD

Period, when our own Perfidy in concert with the *Jewish* Treachery lay'd waste the beauteous Sanctuary of all Grace and Glory; the loving lovely sacred human Form of the divine JESUS CHRIST made Man for the Love of Man. This the melancholy day on which all thankful faithful Christians, fired with filial Love and grateful Resentment; gather together publicly to express their inbred horror and Soul's detestation of the barbarous Parricide; by weeping over the venerable Ruin wrought by human Baseness; by mentally numbering over one by one the Wounds of assassinated JESUS; and glutting their contrite hearts with the Waters of a just Compunction, in Sight of his dear disfigured Relics! For this pious purpose; behold us all united here! --- But ah! Where are those sacred Relics? Alas! let me turn my Eyes whither ever I list, I discover Nothing of him. His sacred Altars are stript; his Tabernacles void; and not even in his favourit darling Retreat, the Bosom of the Faithful, is he this day to be found. Ah! Where then or to what purpose shall we seek him; when, as the Prophet bares witness, * *he was cut off from the Land of the Living?* And with such violence is he ravish'd from our Sight, that he is no where to be found among us upon Earth, this day, but in his faint Resemblance a Crucifix. Alas! Where then

* ISAIAH.
liii. 8.

then are all our Tears amidst this irreparable Loss? How comes it that every Christian Cheek is dry, while there is so much cause to weep. You, Beloved, may purchase *gratis* the Streams of a liquid Concern, your Sorrow need not thirst in vain after Tears, for want of Money to buy them a free passage. No; says ISAIAH: * *Chap. lv. 1.*
All ye, who thirst, come to the Waters: And You, who have no Silver, make haste and buy them without Money and without any exchange. Give then free Vent to your Compassion, Christians! And you my Eyes, no longer stem the Tide of your Affliction. For ah! what use can this Tongue find for Words upon a day, when no Language can have force but that of weeping Eyes? Alas, tortured Saviour! could I but now as heretofore behold thee triumphantly sacramented on that Altar, dictating to me like a Master from his Chair, kindling my Zeal, inspiring my Thoughts and giving Courage to my Labours, I would attempt to preach thee. Yes: *I would declare thy Name to my Brethren: In the midst of this Church I would praise thee.* But! Now thou art ravish'd from me, where shall I find the Spirits to support me? Now that I hear, methinks all Nature dinning in my Ears (*Where is thy God? †*)--- what shall I answer? Whither shall I run in search of succour; in search of power even to
 Q speak?

† PSALM
xxi. 23.

speak?----To thee, eternal Father?----But
 is it not thy dear and only Son my Crimes
 have butcher'd? If upon this day thou
 couldst abandon even him; how shall I
 presume to sue to thee for succour?----Or
 shall I have recourse to thee, oh dolorous
 Mother of my God? Wil't thou, oh mar-
 tyr'd Queen of Heaven, consent that I re-
 new the melancholy Tale? Ah no! Too
 cruel was the Sword of Grief which pierced
 thy Soul before.----Celestial Spirits! An-
 gelic Choirs! I expect not your relief, You
 stand in need yourselves of all your Glory
 to support the horrid Scene.

Ah! how seasonably then do'st thou
 meet my Thoughts, oh sacred dear and
 venerable Cross? " Hail precious Cross!
 " Long-wish'd-for Cross! and now most
 " welcome to my anxious Soul! Receive
 " me a Disciple of him who hung upon
 " thee, my Master Christ. Thou was't
 " the mystic Throne on which he chose
 " to signalize his Mercy: Since made the
 " humble Bed on which he breathed his
 " last. And now this pious Audience, here
 " in thy Temple devoutly gather'd round
 " thee, with zealous ardour of a just im-
 " patience, waits till I unfold the melan-
 " choly Series of those cruel Tortures
 " which his prodigious Love urged him to
 " endure, ere he sigh'd out his lovely loving
 " Soul in thy Embraces.----To thee then
 " let

" let me cling. On thee stretch'd-out, in
 " Spirit, let me imbibe the invaluable Drops
 " of blood he left thee moisten'd with :
 " That, strengthen'd with the Salutory
 " Balm, I may refrain those Tears, which
 " otherwise could not but interrupt my
 " utterance. Repel the Dread which grows
 " upon me at every Step, as I advance
 " the nearer to my Subject: A Dread not
 " caused by the eclipsing Sun, nor splitting
 " Rocks, nor trembling Nature; but by
 " the Death of JESUS. This (ah! only
 " This) the Subject of my Hope, is the
 " just matter of my Terrors. And how
 " shall I forbear to apprehend, both for
 " myself and Audience; when preparing
 " to preach a Tragedy, which needs must
 " make us all, but so much the more cri-
 " minal, if we make not a right use of
 " it; and encrease our Condemnation, if
 " it work not our Conversion? Oh then,
 " thou mystic Sign of TAU! strike our
 " stony Breasts and melt them to Com-
 " punction. But if there be one Sinner
 " here so obstinate, as to persist in a dis-
 " position to hear unmoved his Saviour's
 " bitter Passion; shake all his Senses with
 " such inbred horror as may compell him
 " to withdraw from hence, ere I begin:
 " For all, all I have henceforth to say,
 " shall only serve to One in such a Dispo-
 " sition to augment his Guilt and swell

" his Punishment. Or rather, ah! shock
 " him into true Conversion. Convert us
 " all, and me the first of all, exciting us
 " to glory in Nought but Christ and him
 " crucified. Oh Cross! be thou my only
 " Eloquence: Be all the Life of my Dis-
 " course. Thee let me plant in every heart
 " around me. This, oh sacred Tree is all
 " the Help and all the Hope thou canst
 " to day afford me. And to this End,
 " Thee, oh sacred Mystery of the Cross,
 " profoundly I adore. *Hail, precious Cross,*
 " *our solitary Hope in this sad time of*
 " *Sufferance! Strengthen our Piety with*
 " *increase of Grace, and purify us from*
 " *our former Guilt. AMEN.*



ENOUGH had generous JESUS
 done during the Space of thirty
 Years of holy exemplary Life:
 Enough in other three of zealous
 indefatigable Mission (fill'd up with Sanc-
 tity and Prodigies) towards saving, if pos-
 sible, the wilfully reprobate Race of *Is-
 rael*: And time it was now to gratify his
 pious Impatience for the Redemption of
 his Beloved Elect. Yes *Father!* (says this
 Lord of Love *) *Father! The hour is*
come: Glorify thy Son, that thy Son may
glorify thee: As Thou has't given him power
over all flesh; give him an absolute power
over his own; that with this Flesh, as with

* S JOHN
 xvii. 1, 2.

a Sin-Offering, he may appease thy Wrath; and recall thy Mercy upon all Men; and all which thou has't given to him, to them he may give Life everlasting.

When JESUS then had said this, he went forth with his Disciples beyond the Torrent CEDRON, where was a Garden into which he enter'd and his Disciples with him. * *Ibid.*

But what had Jesus to do there? Did he go thither to compleat that Triumph he so lately had begun in *Jerusalem*? Did he go thither to be honour'd with Garlands of Flowers, with Coronets of Laurel-Leaves, with Wreaths of Olive Branches, with a Diadem of Glory? No: But JESUS went thither to subject that Flesh, which he had received in Gift from his Virgin Mother, to every excess of Pain; and that Pain was to become the Matter of his Glory. This he had made a necessary Condition to his own Glorification. This he had gloried in on Mount *Tabor*; conversing with *Moses* and *Elias* concerning his Excess in *Jerusalem*: This was appointed the efficient Instrument of his endlessly glorious Reign: And This, tho' pregnant with nothing but Shame in the Means, was big with unspeakable Glory in it's End. Now was the illustrious Period of his concluding his mystic Wedding with his spotless Spouse, our Holy Mother the Church. Now was the Occasion when he made to himself a

* *Ibid.*
Chap.
xviii 1.

Disino

portable

* CAN-
TIC. iii. 9,
to the End.

portable Throne of the Wood of Libanus. *
(O the mysterious Throne!) *The Pillars*
or Arms whereof, were by his spotless
Innocence made candid as the purest *Silver*;
the Seat of it rich as the most refined *Gold*,
with his sacred Wounds; *the Going-up of*
it *purpled* all over with his inestimable
Blood; and *the Midst of it* *overspread with*
Charity for the Daughters of Jerusalem.
O Christian Souls then! O costly Purchases
of this eternal *Salomon!* *Daughters of Sion!*
Sally forth and see him in the Diadem
wherewith his Mother has crown'd him on
the day of his Espousal, on the day of the
Joy of his heart. Come forth and let us
pass over the *Mountain of Myrrh* to the
little Hill of Frankincense; from the Racks
he endured in his Soul amidst this Agony,
to the Tortures he bore in his Body amidst
his Passion. But ah! What shall we see in
the bodily Passion of Christ to come-up
to these Sufferings of Soul which he vouch-
safed to submit to in this spiritual Conflict?
Sufferings so much the more exquisitely cruel
than any thing he could undergo in his
Limbs, as the Soul is more noble than the
Body and the Conflicts of the Spirit are
inexpressibly greater and more acute than
those of the Flesh. And this perhaps was
one Reason why our Divine Hero would
suffer so much in Spirit at *Gethsemani*; that,
by the Rudeness of this internal greater
Conflict,

Conflict, he might so fortify and enure him self to sufferings, as to be better able afterwards to undergo the lesser Evils he was preparing to meet at *Jerusalem* and *Golgotha*. But why do I say *lesser* where Nothing was little, but all was immeasurably great? So great that, as the sole Imminity of his Power is able to appoint difference of degrees between Infinit and Infinit, so only the Omnipotence of his Love could have found means on this occasion previously to exceed with so sweet an Excess the unmeasured Infinity of Evils, He afterwards underwent during his Passion in the Flesh; as our following him through every State of it will best make us conceive.

So then, Beloved Christians, Our Love and our Life the Divine JESUS CHRIST, after putting an end to that Supper which was the last of his mortal State, and the final Proof of his exuberant Charity; after recommending to his eternal Father his abandon'd Disciples; after instilling fresh Courage into them by feeding them with his precious Body and Blood, and washing their feet with the tenderest Love and profoundest Humility; after returning thanks to God and singing a Hymn of heavenly Praise to him, sets out to begin his bitter bitter Passion: And the first Step he takes is to pass the Torrent *Cedron*, to agonize in the Garden of *Gethsemani*. Thither

Judas

Judas was preparing to go, that he might deceive and betray *JESUS*: Thither therefore does *JESUS* haste, that he may not deceive or disappoint *Judas*. *Adam* in one Garden had deliver'd up himself, and in himself all human Nature, a voluntary Captive to Sin: Therefore did *JESUS* chuse in another Garden, to begin the Restoration of him and his Offspring to the perfect Liberty of Grace. In a Word as the *First Adam* wrought the Destruction of the World in the Garden of *Eden*; the *Second Adam* thought proper to commence it's Redemption in the Garden of *Olives*. That as, in the former, Death and the Devil had laid the first Foundation of their destructive Empire; so, in the latter, Both might receive the first Shock of that Victory which was effectually to overthrow their Dominion. But ah the unequal Difference between the two Gardens! *That* was a Paradise of Delights: *This* an Orchard of Sorrows. *There* all was charming to the Sight: *Here* every thing terrifying to the Senses. *There* flourish'd the Tree of Life: *Here* grew the Fruits of Death. There was heard the Voice of GOD walking in the

* GENES. Afternoon Air: * Here might be beheld the Son of GOD sorrowfully prostrate to the ground in the Chill of the Night. There the first Man was absorb'd in unspeakable Pleasures: Here the Lord of Men and Angels

Angels was overwhelm'd with unutterable Sadness and Dismay. In short *There* smoothly ran within their bidden Channels recreating Rivers of Water: *Here* violently issued forth of it's natural Limits an excruciating Extravasation of Sweat and Blood. What shall I say? So strange is the Disorder into which this melancholy Comparison throws my fluctuating Thoughts that I should fear being lost to my self, amidst the Crowd of sad Reflections which pour-in upon my Mind; if I did not, in order to follow my Saviour through his Sufferings, resolve to conduct this Discourse by the very same Flames, with which my Divine Lord chose to conduct his Passion and Pains. By the track then of his adorable Foot-steps let me steer my sorrowful contemplative Course over the too fordable Torrent *Cedron*.

But ah, at the first setting out, how does not the Horror of the Way dishearten and terrify me! Who would have thought, Christians, from the Words of the Gospel that we had any thing worse than a Torrent to pass over: Whereas if we propose to follow JESUS, behold we have a wide Ocean to traverse! Well, O my Saviour! Well did'st thou, by the prophetic mouth of thy *Psalmist*, * express this first Step of thine into thy bitter Passion: *I came into the Depth of the Sea, and a Tempest has over-*
R
whelm'd

* PSALM
lxviii. 3.

The PASSION of our LORD

whelm'd me. Yes: A Sea of Sorrows indeed was the Passion of JESUS. And ah how dreadfully beset with Quick-sands and Rocks and Shelves! How cruelly agitated with Storms and Tempests and furious Hurricanes, from the Treachery of *Judas* and the Cowardice and Indolence of his other Disciples; from the Cruelty of the *Jews*; from the Barbarity of the *Gentils*; from the Iniquity of his Judges! But ah how much more severely still from the Sadness Tears and Terrors admitted, nay, invited into and let loose within his own Divine Breast. For—This our generous Lord (as if able no longer to wait the slow Approach of his wish'd-for Tormenters) before he deliver'd up his Body into the hands of his Butchers, would needs deliver up his Spirit into his own. And as all our Guilt took it's Rise from the Seat of thinking; therefore would he, to destroy that Guilt, give the first beginning to his Sufferings by the Martyrdom of Thought: Thus anticipating the Barbarity of his Judges and Executioners, by becoming the voluntary Judge and Torturer of his own Mind.

It seems not at first any very rigorous Idea of the Passion of Christ, that JESUS should be deliver'd up into his own hands, and abandon'd to himself, to be the Executioner of his own Person. For if those
Divine

Divine hands, as we well know, are a merciful Refuge for the most miserable of Wretches and even for the guiltiest of Criminals; how shall Innocence itself meet there with Rigour and Severity? But be pleased to observe, Christians, that, as the first Chastisement which the Divine Equity decree'd for our guilty Parents was to leave them to themselves, that they themselves might be their first Torturers, and the Remorse of their Conscience the first Punishment of their Sin and the first Effect of his Vengeance: Thus too would the Divine JESUS be the first to torment himself, that, having undertaken to satisfy for their and our Guilt, his Satisfaction might bear some proportion with the former Penalty. O my blessed Redeemer! methinks, I see the Excess of thy Love become the secret Sacrificer of thee, leading thee as an innocent Victim to the Altar and chusing the sable Gloom of the Night, the better to compleat the Sacrifice: Whether because all Nature appear'd in solemn Mourning and that time of Silence and Obscurity seem'd more calculated for promoting Terror and Dismay; or because the Senses not being dissipated by external Objects, the Spirit is better able to retreat into itself and act with greater Vigour against itself. In the heart of JESUS CHRIST there were two different Parts; The One the *Superior*

¶ *Pro-pas-
siones.*

† St. MAT.
xxvi. 37.
† S MARK
xiv. 33.

Part, which enjoy'd the beatific Vision of GOD; the Other the *Inferior* Part, which was capable of the ordinary innocent Passions of Man, or as St. JEROM files them in Christ, the *Vice-Passions*; * because never out-running Reason, but ever moving in a perfect Subjection to the Freedom of it's upright Dictates. Thus in his sacred Soul was there an ineffable mixture of Heaven and of the Earth: Over both which presided his infinit Love. And by the appointment of this infinit Love it was that, with one hand he stop'd the Tide of Glory in the Superior Part of his Spirit, by suspending that Influence of the beatific Vision which otherwise must naturally overflow every Faculty of his Soul: While with the other-hand he gave the Reins to every guiltless Passion which could afflict him with Grief, Dismay, Sadness, Fears and Terrors: And, as the *Evangelists* express it, *He began to be afraid, † and weary and sad.* ‡ Behold then this Victim of Love, after sequestering (as St. *Ambrose* expresses it) every Comfort which his Divine Nature could supply him with, giving full loose to every innocent Passion which could torment him as Man. And the first Passion which tortured him was a cruel Fear which tore him with such Violence, that had this been all the Suffering Christ had to endure; his
Suffering

Suffering would still have been without limits.

Oh what a merciless Tyrant is the Passion of Fear! Ingenious to the full as it is cruel, with a kind of malignant Foresight it runs tracing the inmost most secret Foldings of Futurity to turn all into Matter of Torment for human Intellects: And besides creating and oftentimes giving Reality to Evils, which but for our Terrors would never have had any other Existence than in the Imagination, it frequently has recourse to Fiction to oppress us with Grievances which never did nor will exist. However, was it content, with the Cruelty of figuring to our Fancy the Evils it threatens us with, in their real and genuine Colours; its Tyranny were less insupportable: Altho' it would still be true that the Dread of Evils is equally as tormenting as the Evils we dread. But, what is worse! Like a faithless Impostor it exaggerates Danger; and, not satisfied with sending the Soul to encounter the dreaded Evil; it forces the very Evil to intrude itself into the Soul with redoubled Horror. We have an Instance of this from the Book of *Numbers*, and a lively one too, in the Scouts whom the Children of *Israel* dispatch'd from their Camp in the Desert, to take a Survey of the Land of Promise. They went; but unseasonable cruel Fear
going

going with them, who would imagin it? — That delightful Country flowing with Milk and Honey, was, in their Imagination, disfigured into a Nation of horrible Monsters, it's verdant fruitful Gardens and Meadows into pestiferous Marshes and Fens, fertil in nothing but Poisons and Vermin: Their Panic metamorphos'd it's Inhabitants into Giants and themselves into Insects: In short there was not a Foot of that Land of Pleasures but what to their frighted Fancy abounded in Horrors: Witness the Account they brought back to their astonish'd Brethren: * *The Land which we have survey'd, say they, devoureth it's Inhabitants: The People whom we saw are of a tall Stature, certain Monsters of the Giant-kind, to whom being compared we appear'd but mere Locusts. And whence could proceed so strange a Disorder in the Judgment but from an Error in the Fancy, the fraudulent Work of Fear? Now if Objects which in themselves are not only no Evils but real Goods, can assume so terrible an Aspect and cause so much Horror when beheld in a Panic; ah what Anguish, Dearest JESUS, must not thy tender Soul have felt from the bitter Images of thy Passion with which thou was't pre-occupied by officious Fear! For what alas had JESUS to behold in this killing Contemplation? Was it, perhaps,*

* NUM-
BERS XIII.
33, 34.

perhaps, a Land of Promise, a terrestrial Paradise his Thoughts were surveying; where a constant unchangeable fragrant Verdancy of smiling Nature, gaily sporting amidst the Luxuriance of spritely Flowers and blooming Fruits, join Spring and Autumn in one continued Season of innocent Delights? Ah no! *Jerusalem, Jerusalem* was the fatal Object of his sadden'd Thoughts: That *Jerusalem* which was to be the tragic Seat of all his unmerited Sorrows. And what had he to behold there? Alas all he could see was Spittings and Buffets and Bruises and ill-usage: He saw his Cords, his Scourges, his Thorns, and Hammers and Nails and Spear: He saw Scoffs, Revilings, Blasphemies, Ignominy, Crosses and Death. Oh sadden'd JESUS! What did'st Thou not foresee of all which is cruel? What did'st thou not apprehend of all which could torment thee? So killing was the Pre-presentation of all this Complication of Horrors that we may truly say, without saying too much, that as the Passion of Christ, while he endured it, surpass'd every other Martyrdom, so did the Fear of that Passion, in his Agony, exceed his very Passion itself; and, enhanced in Acuteness by his lively Foreknowledge, made such dreadful Havock of his sacred Frame as might almost give the Title of Mercy to the Barbarity of his Executioners.

What

What shall we say then, or be able to conceive; which is capable of giving us an adequate Idea of the exquisit Torture, which the Sadness, he also gave an innocent Loose to, added to the bitter Effects of his Fears? Had our Divine Lord given no other Symptons of the inward Affliction of his Spirit; That which he gave to his Apostles was sufficient to make us comprehend that his Anguish must be beyond Bounds: Since it compell'd a God to complain and say: *My Soul is sorrowful even unto Death.* * What else could he mean in this moving Expresssion than to insinuate to his Disciples, that the Sadness of Heart which the Foresight of his Sufferings threw him into was so severe, that he was beginning to die with the Vehemence of it? Or mehap would he have them to know, that this very bitterness of Soul would alone have been sufficient to kill him, but that he miraculously preserved his Life for farther Torments. Oh my too sorrowful JESUS! Oh that thou had'st but some kindly Object to divert thee from so destructive a Thought! Oh for some seasonable Intrusion to break-in upon thy Mind and not suffer all the Horrors of *Golgotha* to overwhelm thee amidst the Gaieties of *Gethsemani*! Arise then, gentle Saviour, arise: No more, prostrate on the Ground, continue to give a Loose to these self-tormenting

* St. MAT.
xxvii. 38.

menting Griefs. But alas! Am I awake or in a dream, when I hear my Saviour courting his Disciples to stand by him? *Stay here and watch with me: —* does he say? * *Ibidem?*
 Poor JESUS! So then even this weakest of our Weaknesses thy Terrors and Griefs reduced thee to, of not even daring to be safe (when safest) alone; and (as it were) like an Infant which starts at it's Shadow, not caring to trust thyself to thyself? Yet ah sweetest Object of my Love! Still art thou left all alone, to encounter thy Fears to struggle with thy Griefs. Thou, who would'st thus purposely take upon thee all our Infirmities; must have no one to buoy thee up amid'st thy Weaknesses. Thy Disciples, so far from having Eyes to weep over thee, have none to watch with Thee. All alone thou art left; and had'st thou remain'd so, how much less had not thy Sufferings been? For ah! what was the end of thy Solitude, but the Commencement of thy Chains. From Company what but Evils had'st thou to expect? What Relief could'st thou hope to receive? In thy Blessed Mother there was Nothing but Condolence and Sympathy to redouble thy Griefs: In thy Apostles Nothing but Inconstancy to flee from thee, or Daringness to disown thee, or Treachery to betray thee. Ah! from whom then or where should'st thou expect any Comfort in a Night, in a Garden;
 S which,

which, fruitful in Repose and rich in Delights for every one besides, had nought to afford thee but Dangers and Dreads? Go then once more, afflicted Lord; and, prostrate before him who alone is able to afford thee Relief, force down the Succour of thy eternal Father with the vigour of thy Prayers with the vehemence of thy Tears and Complaints. "Oh my Divine Father! (methinks I hear him saying with a loud Cry and many Tears, as St. Paul represents him: *) O my Divine Father: Whom I behold stretching-out
 " to me the inebriating Chalice of my
 " bitter Sufferings, behold how I languish
 " at the Foresight of it! What tho' thou
 " be resolved on my Death; still ar't thou
 " my Father, and still will I call thee so.
 " *Oh my Father then! if it be possible;*
 " *let this Chalice pass from me.* † If so
 " the Laws of thy provident Justice; re-
 " quire, that I must die; let it not be
 " with drinking this too bitter Cup: No,
 " decree some milder less inglorious Death;
 " a Death more becoming the Life of a
 " God. *Father! if it be possible; let this*
 " *Chalice pass from me.*"

* Hebrews
v. 7.

† St MAT.
xxvii. ver.
39.

‡ Ibid.

Nevertheless not as I will, but as Thou: continues Christ. ‡ And from these last Words, it is evident that the Petition of Jesus, great as his Fear and Sadness were, was not an absolute Demand, proceeding from

from any efficacy of Desire to escape his future Passion. No: *Jesus*, I have already observed, had the perfect Liberty to die, notwithstanding the Precept of his Divine Father; Inasmuch as he was free to ask a release from his Death, and the Eternal Father disposed to grant him whatever he should ask with efficacy of Will. *JESUS* then was not here diffidently asking any thing opposit to his eternal Father's Decrees; but merely exposing to him the inefficacious Desires and conditional Wishes of the inferior Part of his blessed Soul. And why so! Ah! it was to represent to his Divine Parent the Immensity of his Afflictions and the exuberance of his Satisfaction by comparison with the Crimes he was satisfying for; and at the same Time to give Mankind a true Sense of the much their Redemption cost him.

Enough, Enough does it appear, with what Bitterness the false Sweetness of our Crimes have oppress'd the heart of innocent *JESUS*. Oh for an Angel then from Heaven to administer to this Divine Sufferer the Comfort he stands so much in need of! Oh for some celestial Messenger of joy to buoy-up the fainting Hero! Behold he descends:— And for the Sum of all his Comfort, the celestial Messenger beseeches him (methinks) to remember that his Death is to restore the Life of Grace

to the World; that his Blood is to purify Mankind and wash away all Sin from human Breasts. Oh welcome Comfort; if This be so! And if it be not; thy Evils are indeed, my Saviour, past all Remedy. Alas, too truly are the Sufferings of Christ without a Remedy; since the very Consolation the Angel comes to bring him can only serve to sharpen his Anguish. For was it, think you, Christians, the sole Foresight of his Sufferings which render'd him thus comfortless? ah no! All the most terrifying Images of his Passion he had foreseen unconcern'd; could he but have foreseen them alone. But to think of suffering such exquisit Tortures and suffer them in vain, was a cruel Circumstance which must render the Foresight of them inexpressibly more insupportable than the very Pains themselves. It is a great Alleviation to the severest of Labours encounter'd in any Undertaking, to know that those Labours will be crown'd with Success. "The Expectation of the Laurel, says *Origenes*, "is a lenitive Balsom which softens sooths "and almost heals-up every Wound received in Battle." Point out to a true bred Warrior the batter'd Breach of a Fortress besieged; through which he may hope, after a generous Struggle, to come at the Laurel of Victory: And let Batteries of Cannon be placed at it's entrance; let the Ramparts

Ramparts be lined with thousands of armed hands to dispute the Ascent; let Swords and Darts and Spears and Guns be ready to receive him; let Fire and Flames and all the rude variety of warlike Mischiefs fall crackling under, or fly whizzing round him; let Numbers of his slain Companions shew him in their Fall the many Deaths he has to encounter: All, all shall want strength to shake his Courage; if Probability but promising Success excite him to the pleasing all-rewarding Hope of carrying his Point. How bravely shall not he dare each danger; despise the Wounds, the Cuts, the Bruises, the red-hot Slugs profoundly lodged within him; and count a Gain, his Loss of Flesh and Waste of Blood? How firmly shall not he stand the Brunt of all himself as if himself invulnerable? Nay as if design'd for more than an impenetrable Bulwark, how stoutly shall not he fight his way and force a Passage through for his Self and following Squadrons, and hug at length the very Death which reaches-out to him the glorious Crown he fought for. But if the same generous Hero, in the very act of beholding the painful dangerous Prospect, sees but little probability of Success; oh the embitter'd Discovery! oh what disheartening Damps must check each noble Emotion rising in his Breast! What Indolence of Soul must
sicken

ficken Thought and make even Resolution stagger! Ah! what then, if, not only far from hopes of Success, he have certain Assurances of exhausting all his Labours Spirits Blood and Life to a fruitless purpose? What if some inbred prophetic Pre-sage should irresistibly convince him that all those Labours Spirits Blood and Life should only serve to egg his Followers to their utter overthrow? Oh Shock surpassing every other Shock in Nature! And this, this was the very plight of our half-expiring Lord at the foot of Mount *Olivet*. The same Divine Fore-knowledge, which shew'd him his future Passion, shew'd him also that that Passion would be not only fruitless but ruinous to multitudes of Sinners through their own Perversity. Could the Angel have assured him that his Sufferings should sanctify the Universe; (But why do I talk so largely?) could he have consoled him with the Assurances of saving one half at least of Human Nature; nay the few Catholics, the little Flock which would adhere immoveably to his Doctrins; welcome, Thorns! welcome, Nails! welcome, Cross! welcome, Ignominy! And Thou, oh Death, thrice welcome had'st thou been. All your Terrors had been confined to your Names and wanted power to affect my JESUS with any thing but Joy. But how could the Angelic Mes-senger

senger assure him of what his divine Presentiment had assured him would not be effected? And this Presentiment it was which threw the Divine JESUS into such an Agony as bedew'd his whole sacred Frame with a sanguinary Sweat; and forced this Lord of Majesty, whose human Eyes were too confined to give his Sorrows a free Passage, to weep-out Tears of Blood through every Pore.

To sow so much sacred invaluable Blood, one Drop of which might ransom a whole World, and yet to save so slender a part of that World and reap so spare a Harvest? To die and die for ungrateful Creatures, who would only make use of his Death to forward their own ruin? To suffer such inexpressible Torments for the love of Souls and yet to be likely to redeem so very few? oh Thought too cruel! Hopes too narrow! Prospect too confined for the infinit Goodness of a generous God, who was going to sacrifice himself on a shameful Cross for all Mankind! I know not how, but so it is: A certain secret Boding within me, figures JESUS CHRIST to my Fancy on the top of Mount Olivet, casting his penetrating Eyes triumphant over every Distance of Time and Place, calling past Ages to his presence, commanding the present to stop, and summoning the future before him. A while he pauses:—But
oh

oh the cruel Pause! Beholding so many ungrateful Wretches in every Age and Nation; so many in the unwritten Law, so many in the written Law, so many in the more ample Law of Grace, nay so many at this very Season of Repentance Grace and Mercies. Observing so many in every part of the World; so many in *Europe*, so many in *England*, so many in *London*, so many (ah Heaven grant I may not have reason to say!) in this very Audience, who are resolved (or at least not unresolved) in spite of his Passion, Blood and Death to be damn'd: Methinks I hear him mournfully crying out by the Mouth of his Prophet: *

* ISAIAH
xlix. 4-

" *Have I then labour'd in vain? and in*
 " *vain have I wasted my Strength? Have*
 " *I then done and suffer'd so much, and*
 " *must I do and suffer so much more, all*
 " *to so very little purpose? In vain have*
 " *I spent the flower of all my Strength*
 " *and Spirits? Must, after all, so many In-*
 " *sults borne, and Tortures felt, and Blood*
 " *pour'd-forth be void of Fruit? Have I*
 " *then labour'd in vain? and in vain have*
 " *I wasted my Strength? O my eternal*
 " *Father not to repine or murmur at thy*
 " *Will, do I say thus much. No: if so thy*
 " *Will require; if Man's Redemption so*
 " *demand; let every Twig in this Garden*
 " *of Olives grow into a Cross, and let me*
 " *be successively nail'd to every one. For*
 " *not*

“ not my Will but thine be done. But ah
 “ eternal Father! For whom wilt thou
 “ have thy dear and only Son thus cruelly
 “ ill-treated? For Infidels? Ah! how very
 “ Few of them will take one Step to-
 “ wards reaping profit from my Death?
 “ Shall it then be for thy chosen People of
 “ *Israel*? But are not These most impeni-
 “ tent implacable Enemies to thee as well
 “ as me? Shall it then be for Christians?
 “ But how many of these shall continue
 “ to rack and rend the mystic Body of
 “ my Church with Schisms, Scandals, He-
 “ resies and Anarchy! Shall it then be at
 “ least for Catholics? Ah Father eternal!
 “ how few; how very few, even of These
 “ will have courage to benefit by my Death
 “ and Sufferings? What, tho’ on a *Good-*
 “ *Friday* some few of them relenting shall
 “ try to heal-up my Wounds with a few
 “ passing Tears of Compunction? How
 “ soon, how very soon after *Easter*, will
 “ not they open them all anew with fresh
 “ Offences? Ah! *have I then labour’d in*
 “ *vain? and in vain have I wasted my*
 “ *Strength? Ah Father! if it be possible;*
 “ *let this Chalice pass from me.*”

And could the eternal Father remain
 inexorable to the Cries of so much Grief
 and Fear and Tears and Sweat and Blood
 and Agony? Could JESUS plead thus ear-
 nestly for Succour and yet plead in vain?

T

No!

* HEB. V. 7. No, says St. PAUL, * *He was heard for his Reverence.* And the eternal Father, to console him in his Agony, proposed to him, by the Ministry of his Angel, such Motives as, not serving to lessen his Sorrows, might at least fortify his Resolution to bear them: Assuring him, that tho' his Passion would be useless to Many, it should be fruitful to Some; that his Cross would one day be held in sovereign honour throughout the Christian World. Perhaps too was he assured that on this sacred day it would be held in special veneration in this devout Assembly. And who knows but one of JESUS's grand Consolations in the mid'st of his Agony might be a Presage of the extraordinary Piety with which some chosen Souls in this very Audience shall cultivate his dying Sorrows in their Breast? Ah let us not disappoint him then! What need has JESUS of Angels to minister comfort to him which We are better qualified to give him than all the Angelic Choirs put together? The great Comfort to be given him, amid'st his Agony, was that his Death should be made efficacious. This the Angels could not do: 'Tis you must do it, Christians. 'Tis from you, oh Catholics, Christ expects this first Fruit of that first Effusion of his Blood. Enough there are already of Sinners in the World, who have render'd the Agony of Christ useless

useless by their Neglects, without your adding to the Number. Enough are the Multitudes of the Damn'd who have render'd that Agony even destructive to them by their impenitent Obstinacy in Sin: Why should you add to the Croud, and augment the Griefs of JESUS by joining your Condemnation to theirs? Enough, full enough, Christians, are the Crimes with which we ourselves have already afflicted him. If He then graciously endured inexpressible Distress to annihilate our Guilt; shall we suffer that Guilt to assume fresh arrogance to offend him over again?

Oh Sins of human Nature! Oh Sins of this whole Audience! Oh Sins of this miserable Breast! In what a Deluge of Sorrows have you not drown'd the Joy of Paradise! Now, now it is I begin to discover all the foul Enormity of your Nature: And, if my own Compunction be not sufficient to make me feel your weight; ah! plainly do I conceive it in the Affliction of my God. Oh Christian Hearers, Every-One! Oh me! You have greatly sinn'd and so have I. We have all of us greatly sinn'd! And our Iniquities are the Instruments which have thus cruelly tortured the loving Soul of lovely JESUS in this Garden of *Gethsemani*. If he fainted beneath a load of Sadness, made *sorrowful even unto Death*; for our Crimes did he faint: If he wept with his sacred

♥ Chap.
liii. 5.

Visage to the ground; for our Crimes did he weep thus prostrate: If he, to weep forth Tears of Sweat and Blood, open'd an Eye in every Vein; for our Crimes did he open it, Yes, says the Prophet ISAIAH: * *He was wounded for our Iniquities for our Crimes was he broken.* Shall we then remember all this, unmoved for him and for ourselves? Shall we have assembled here to contemplate his Passion, only to render it useless to us afterwards? No: Forbid it gracious Heaven! No; I say: Ere we quit this Garden, ere we conclude the Contemplation of this Mystery; let us generously resolve to co-operate with the Blood of JESUS: To the end that, tho' this precious Liquor should be shed in vain on all the World beside, it may at least yield benefit to us. Let us then for this end, join to the Victim of his Love the Sacrifice of our Contrition, in such an inbred Grief for our Sins as may at once console and imitate the Sorrow of his Breast.

No more does this Divine Martyr ask of his eternal Father the Removal of his Chalice. No, my Beloved Fellow-Christians: 'Tis to you he now says, *Let this Chalice pass from me.* Let it pass from my Breast to yours. Let the Sorrow which oppress'd my innocent Bosom now afflict your guilty one. Yes, Brethren, let it pass

pass into the inmost part of your Souls, to rack you with inward grateful generous Grief that ever you committed those Sins for which he shed so much Blood and Tears. Yes my Saviour, Yes: Let the Chalice of thy Sorrows pass from thee to us. Be comforted if our Contrition can console thee. Accept Dear Lord the Sacrifice of our humble contrite hearts. Oh how it stings us to the quick, for thy loved sake alone, that ever we committed Sins which cost thee, so much Sweat and Tears and Blood! And ah! no more will we henceforth consent to offend thee with one mortal Sin; tho' it were to purchase the whole World, or free us from a Thousands Deaths. Vile enough have we already been to force through thy sacred Veins that bloody Sweat; without joining thy Executioners in insulting thee farther. Christians! Let your Hearts repeat what my Mouth has utter'd. And that you may have leisure to renew these Sentiments, ere I take JESUS out of his own hands to put him into the hands of his Enemies, I shall trust him awhile in yours. See then you treat him well, speak to him the Affections of your Souls; while I try to regain that Breath, which over-bearing Tenderness has almost taken from me. Tell him, how much you love him: Tell him, how grieved you are for having offended him;

him: Tell him with a heart full of Candor; a bosom full of fervor; and Eyes full of Tears. Yes: give every tender loose to Tears. For, if this be not a time for weeping; when—ah! when shall there be a Time?



CHRISTIANS! Enjoy Your pious Grief: While you have time even weep your fill for agonizing JESUS. 'Tis lawful; 'tis commendable; nay a Duty to indulge each sad Affection of the Soul in sight of Such Distress, of such a Sufferer. If He grudged not to endure it all for us, why or how shall we deem it too much to cherish a mournful Memory of it? But! ah what strange what sudden Tumult hastens-on to interrupt our melancholy Feast of Sorrow? Alas! there is no time to enjoy a leisurely Grief, where every present Horror is so closely follow'd by a greater. O my dear sympathising Brethren! If so severe appear'd to you the tragic Scene your pious Contemplation shew'd you in this Garden; ah how much ruder must appear, the next which opens to us! If Love treated *Jesus* with such roughness, what shall the Rage of Hatred do? Hitherto we have consider'd this Divine Personage in his own hands: And how bloody have they not made him all over? Ah! what Blood then shall be left in him to shed, now that he is
going

going (as it was) out of himself to be put into the hands of his Enemies, into the hands of his Butchers? Hitherto his Pangs began in his Soul and vented themselves dispersing through his Body: Now shall they overspread his whole sacred Frame; and thence, recoiling by a kind of Tyrant *Antiperistasis*, intrude back to his very Soul their united Violence. Drowsy Disciples of sorrowing JESUS! You who have slept over the Recital of his Agony! ah venture not to awake to the growing Labours of his Passion! Even *sleep ye now your fill and take your rest.* * What have ^{*St. MAT. XXVI. 45.} unrepenting Sinners to do with Care or Compassion for JESUS now, when *behold the Hour approacheth, and the Son of Man shall be betray'd into the hands of Sinners?* † But no: Surely no One of you, † ^{† Ibidem.} my dear-loved Auditors, can be so cruel-hearted as not to have pitied your agonizing Lord. *Arise then let us go: Behold he approacheth who shall betray him.* ‡ Oh ‡ ^{‡ Ver. 46.} what Confusion are my Spirits hurried into, while attentive to this Passage; wherein Nothing was to be seen but Rabble and Riots and Spears and Clubs and Lanthorns and Torches: Nothing to be heard but clattering of Clubs, clashing of Arms, and mixtures of Shouts and Cries? O what a Number of Sacrilegious Hands employ'd against this Divine Innocent, which Gratitude

tude should have employ'd in his Service! Ah! is it just that, while his omnipotent Arm is uplifted to the Succour of All, the Arms of all should be thus raised to his Oppression? But meet it was that the Prophecy should be fulfill'd in this Divine

* GENES. ISMAEL: * *His Hands against all and the Hands of all against him.*

Who, but for melancholy Experience, could have conceived it possible that the Saviour of the World, come on purpose to redeem it, should find Enemies in the World? And yet alas did he find them. Yes, he found Soldiers to apprehend him, Judges to condemn him, and Butchers to flea him with Scourges: Who would have thought it? But what is worse he found a Friend to betray him and no one to stand by him: Who could have believed it? But did not Peter stand-up in his Defence? Was not He *one of them who were with JESUS, and who stretching forth his hand drew out his Sword, and striking the Servant of the High Priest cut of his Ear?* †

† St. MAT. XXVI. 51.

Yes, fervent, but fickle Disciple thou was't. But thy heavenly Master wanted not such Defence. He came not to conquer by Fury but by Meekness: *Put-up again thy Sword then into it's place: For all who take the Sword shall perish by the Sword.* †

† Ibid. 52.

What did all thy Zeal without Discretion avail, but to put thy milder Lord to the expence

expenſe of a Miracle to cure the wound thou made'ſt? Why all this miſplaced Fury againſt *Malcus*, a part of which were well employed againſt thyſelf; whoſe own Inconſtancy ſhall quickly coſt poor JESUS more Affliction than all the Insolence of his Apprehenders? In ſpite of thy paſt Proteſtations to ſtand by him, in ſpite of all thy preſent fervor to defend him, even *in this night, before the Cock ſhall crow, thou wilt deny him thrice.* * Learn hence oh Christians to fear and tremble. Let not the Faults of Others warm your Zeal with Indiſcretion, to expoſe; or Fury, to oppreſs them: But rather awake your vigilance to watch over yourſelves. Truſt not to preſent fits of Fervor: But dreading, leſt too profound a Self-ſecurity ſhould prove your greateſt Danger, *let Each among you, who* † 1 COR. *thinks he ſtands,* uſe ſtill the greater Cau- x. 12. *tion that he do not fall.* †

Our Divine Lord then wanted not the Arms of the Fleſh to reſcue him from ſuffering in the Fleſh? No: He had at his beckon *Legions of Angels*; ‡ Yet even ‡ 534 *theſe did he not need nor make uſe of.* The ſole Majeſty of his Countenance had ſufficed for his Guard, had he ſo pleaſed: And even the ſole Meekneſs of his Aſpect, as the Fact made appear. No ſooner did he perceive the ribbald Troop, who arm'd with Fury were breathing nought
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but his Destruction, than He (as if they had been a Band of Friends) with all the awful Majesty of Meekness, hasting on to meet them, mildly ask'd: * *Whom seek ye?* And, they answering *Jesus of Nazareth*, strait with an assuring Calmness he replied: + *Ibid.* 5. + *I, even I am he.* Twice he repeats the endearing Words; and twice fall the Ribbalds prostrate at his sacred Feet, their Faces to the ground, their Souls and Senses with their Fears almost buried under it. Oh almighty Power of heavenly Meekness! Oh Terror-striking Sounds of humble *Jesus!* *I am he?* O think, my Soul, and quake before-hand! If these mild Accents utter'd by the humble Son of Man, with such a gentle Tone, had power thus to terrify a harden'd Band of desperate Ruffians; ah! what Terrors shall not force each guilty Soul to quake, when this same Son of God as well as Man, no more a tender Saviour but a rigorous Judge, with stern Severity of Looks shall say: "Sinner! 'tis I: Yes, *I am he*, whom thou has't rashly dared so grievously so often and so obstinately to insult?" What! *Jesus* but saying *I am he* strait fells the formidable Squadron to the Ground? He then alone who lay'd them prostrate can enable them to rise: And only He who stripp'd them of their Liberty could give them power over his own. If then they needed his

his licence to lay hands upon him; they were not long held in Suspence without it. No: LOVE beneficent LOVE had already bound his generous heart, and this Secret Captivity of heart made him renounce and give up all his Privileges. JESUS therefore, in concert with LOVE, resolved to work no more Miracles for his Safety, voluntarily gave himself up into the hands of his Persecutors. Still—who, Christians, do you imagin, might be the first Dread-defying Wretch, who ventured to lay violent hands upon the Lord of Liberty? Was it, think you, some Infidel, some Atheist, some Canabal, some Monster-Compound of Tyger and Barbarian? Such had been proper Instruments for a Deed so black. But no: The unnatural Act was too atrocious for their softer less ungrateful Nature. To aggravate the dire Affront, the Execution of such Baseness must be reserved for an Apostle.

Oh Judas! Judas! Was't Thou then the basest Felon whom the *Jews* could pitch upon, to head the dauntless Rabble sent to seize on JESUS? Perfidious Wretch! Basest of Traitors! That JESUS chose thee to spread his Name from Pole to Pole; And ar't thou come to bind his sacred Person with a false Embrace and betray him thus into the hands of Barbarity? Was this the best Return thou had'st to make

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him

him for making thee of the Number of his chosen Twelve, for bringing thee to the Dignity of Priesthood, for feeding thee with his precious Body and Blood; to betray him with a murderous Kiss? To make use of his Friendship for thee, to perpetrate thy Enmity against him? To pervert the surest Pledge of Peace and Safety into a Signal of War and Ruin? *Whomever I shall kiss, that is He: Hold him?* * Oh Wretch of Wretches! Oh *Antonomasia* of all Traitors! Oh———But! Since that all-forgiving Lord whom thou betrayest, gives thee the Kiss of Peace; I will not declare against thee War. Since He vouchsafes to call thee Friend; I will not call thee one opprobrious Name. Say then, *Friend* (since JESUS calls thee so) *to what ar't thou come?* † Is it to adore *ad extra*, that loving Lord whose precious Body Blood and Soul and God-head are still enshrined within thy Breast? Or is it to make an honourable Reparation for the Injury thou has't done him in selling his unpurchaseable Majesty for thirty Pieces of perishable Dross? Ah no! The Rage, with which thy impious Tribe *draw near, lay hands on JESUS, and hold him.* ‡ in captivity, sufficiently betrays the unrelenting Perfidy with which thou ar't come to add to thy secret Treachery the public Insult of seizing him with as many hands as thou has't brought

* St. MAT.
xxvi. 48.

† *Ibid.* 50.

‡ *Ibid.*

brought along with thee. Go then, unhappy Creature! Go! How little does thy ill-judged Avarice avail Thee! Giving-up thy Lord, thou has't given-up every Treasure. Not even thy sordid Bribe shall ought avail thee. No: Puke-forth the Price of this flagitious deed and let it buy a *Burying Place for Strangers*. * What-
 ever thy perverted Views might be, JESUS consented not to being sold, for the encouragement of Covetise; but that his Blood might be a Pledge of Hospitality, an Aylum even to Strangers, even in Death. Go then; repent thee of thy Folly; and, for want of a viler Tongue to accuse thee, become thy own Accuser. Say then, for thou may'st say with Truth: *I have sinned, betraying just Blood.* † Judas! Thou has't † *Ibid.* 4. said it: But oh misplaced Repentance! Oh misguided Penitent! Why own thus much to thy Accomplices? Or why not say as much to thy forgiving Master? ah had'st thou but join'd to that *Hail Rabbi*, † with † *Ibid.* which thou did'st betray him, one deep
 relenting Sigh, and said after DAVID, || || *Psalm* *To thee alone have I sinn'd and done Evil* L. 6. *before thee!* How happily had'st not thou repair'd all the former Wrongs thou had'st done him! How had'st thou not afforded him room to pardon thee, room to be justified in restoring thee to his Grace and room to overcome, when rashly judged
 for

* St. MAT.
xxvii. 7.

† *Ibid.*
xxvi. 49.

for so doing! * But ah thy Repentance is a Repentance of Despair, not a Repentance of Love, and therefore void of Fruit. In vain dost thou think, along with the Wages of thy Iniquity, to throw the Guilt of it on thy Accomplices. The Perfidy is all thy own. Thou hast sinn'd, and *what is that to them? Do thou look to it.* † Go then once more unrelenting JUDAS! Go, most hapless of Wretches! Receive the true Wages of thy Perversity and for want of a viler Executioner become thy own. I make no doubt, Christians, but that you are all by this time exasperated against the Treachery of this false Disciple. But ah! why then do you practise it yourselves? Oh what Treacheries against JESUS does not Avarice, Lust, Revenge, Ambition daily work in the Breast of Christians! Does not Every-one daily sell him for some paltry fleeting false unprofitable Gain. How often do many of you say in your hearts to JESUS's Enemies, to *Satan* and his Ministers, along with *Judas*: † “ *What will you give me and I will deliver him to you?* Oh could I at any rate but get this Sum of Money, that other Toy! Oh could I but allure that Beauty to my Will! Might I but

† S. MAT.
xxvii. 41

† Ibid.
xxvi. 15.

* For the farther Explanation of this Reflection see the Paraphrase to the *Seven Penitential Psalms*, upon this Verse: Publish'd by the same Author.

“ ruin

“ruin or oppress that Adversary! Oh for
“this Post! that Title! The Smiles and
“Favour of Such a Prince, or such a
“Man in Power!” — But Jesus must be
injured to compass this Desire. “No,
“matter. *What will you give me, and I*
“*will deliver him to you?*” Ah Christians!
Let us, learn from the Fall of Judas, into
what Extremities a favorit Appetite in-
dulged may plunge a Man, when it can
urge him to sell his God. Let us learn
from his Ruin that there is no Price to be
set upon God; and that he never ought to
be made the Tool of our inordinate Desires
or worldly Interests. Or if we have already
been so wretched as to barter him for
earthly Considerations; ah! let us ransom
him with our Tears; let us rescue him
with the Returns of our penitent Love.
Why shall we load Jesus with a Repeti-
tion of our Crimes, when these have al-
ready overwhelm’d him with Chains?

Sacred Chains of my Redeemer, which
with this first Moment of his Captivity
closed-up the last Period of his civil Life!
Through You it was, he first began to be
no more his own Master, deliver’d into
the hands of the Powers of Darkness,
who robb’d him unjustly of two sorts of
Liberty common to all Men; his natural
Liberty and his civil Freedom. The For-
mer (Beloved) was taken from him by ig-
noble

noble Cords, and the Latter by that insulting Arrest which put him into the Hands of Public Justice; or rather let me say, of unjust Tyranny. In short he began his Passion by his Chains; and we ought to adore those very Chains, altho' the Chains of JESUS; since he submitted to them, only to break asunder our Chains, those Appetites which hold us Captives here to Sin, and shall hereafter confine us to eternal Flames; if we make not a right use of his Confinement to shake them off. Sacred Garden of *Olives* where this Capture was made! Sacred Torrent of *Cedron* made precious with his dropping Blood! I bid you now adieu. Already do they hurry my JESUS along: Already have the Twelve forsaken him: Methinks I see the Trophy of his beloved JOHN's Timidity (the *Lin-*
nen Garment *) which he forsook to flee the lighter) borne in insulting Triumph amidst the Populace. JESUS is left alone to all the wanton Insults of a tumultuous Mob. After him then, Christians, let our Imagination haste: After him let me lead your pitying hearts. Yet ah! expect not, I should lead you forward with any sort of Order. What possibility is there of keeping Order, where all is wild Disorder and Confusion? How is it possible to give you a regular description of the Fury with which they assail him on every side in this painful opprobrious

* MARK
 xiv. 51,
 52.

probrious Passage from the Garden to the City; when, after one Soldier's having seized his Person, all the barbarous Troop pour'd-in upon him with such impetuosity, that, like a Pack of Mastifs, you would have thought they mean'd nothing less than to tear him immediately Limb from Limb? How shall I point-out to you, in such a Riot, which Ruffians beat him to the Ground, how many trampled on him, or who loaded him with Spittle, Dirt and Cords and Bruises; where all were jointly busied in buffeting him forward or dragging him along? All then which I shall aim at doing, is, to follow my injured Saviour, by the track of his blood, and halt awhile at the Places where he suffer'd most (if most there can be where all was to excess) and reverently gather-up the melancholy Relics of Distress, which he shall leave behind untrodden uneffaced by the Rabble Crew which thus surround him.

I am not talking to you, Christians, of a common Thief, abandon'd to the Mercy of the Populace; nor yet of some fierce Tyger thrown amongst Dogs to worry. No: I am talking to you of the gentle Lamb of God, your Lord and mine, plunged by our Crimes into a worse Condition. Ah! where then is your Compassion? Behold how this innocent Lamb, by the violence of sacrilegious hands is hurried

X

along

* S JOHN
xviii. 13.

† *Ibid.* 22.

along through the melancholy Streets of *Jerusalem* all cover'd with Dirt and Indignities! The first Tribunal He is haled to is that of *Annas* * the Father in Law of the then reigning High-Priest, who grown old in Iniquities as in years, with no just room to detain him, yet wants the justice to acquit him. He questions our Lord about his Doctrin and our Lord appeals for the justification of it to the People. Could there be a greater Mark at once of Meekness and Innocence? Yet needed there no more to make one of this iniquitous Judge's Servants smite Christ with a vehement Stroke upon his divine Cheek, in complaisance to his Master. † Oh how many Souls are led away from the Service of God by servil Complaisance for Creatures! Oh what a Tyrant World, where Masters are best to be pleased at the expence of God's Honour, at the cost of a Dependent's Salvation! Oh Folly! Oh Malice of worldly Respect: Cause of the first remarkable Injury which JESUS received in his Passion! First indeed, but neither the last nor the least; if we consider four Circumstances attending it: The Person who gave the Blow; the manner of giving it; the Place where it was given, and the Dignity of the Personage it was level'd at. The Striker was a Soldier, a menial Servant too, and the Servant of a Priest, of a Judge, of one

one, who, in both Capacities, should have been an Advocate for the Criminal and much more a Protector of the Crimeless. The manner was insolent, was daring, was oppressive and painful; it was given with all the Vigour of Cruelty; and tended at once to stop the Mouth of the Accused from a just Defence, and to give assurance to his Accusers to aggravate a Charge, they might swell with impunity. The Place was a public Tribunal where the greatest of Felons are indulged with Immunity and Safety; and therefore the greater the Grievance for the Innocent to be there insulted. Ah what then must it be for the Son of God to receive so gross an Affront from so vile a hand, with so much pain and excess as to bear the external Marks of it imprinted on his blessed Cheek, and that in the presence of a Judge, in the eyes of the Public! Tell me, Men and Angels, were you ever witnesses to so grievous an Affront as this which my Jesus here received? Were you ever Spectators of so astonishing a Patience? What Threats did he return? What Reproaches did he make. What Anger did he express at so foul an Affront? Ah! all the notice he took of it was, with an amorous Tone and modest Rebuke to answer: * *If I have spoken ill; give testimony of the Evil: But if well; why strikest thou me?* Come, human Sufferers!

ners! Come, you who are honour'd with sharing a simple Taste of JESUS's Passion! Come, you who think you endure your little Ills with Constancy! Come and compare your Patience with that of JESUS, and you will find, that, if your Sufferings are indeed but little in proportion, your Patience still is less.

Virtue even in Distress never fails to strike an insupportable awe into Vice amid'st all it's gayest Splendor: *Annas* therefore, unable any longer to stand the irresistible Lustre of JESUS's Innocence: transmits him bound to *Caiphas*; * where all his Ill-treatment was redoubled. So true is it that Men generally speaking improve in Vices as they advance in Dignities. *Caiphas* was reigning High-Priest for the then Year: And He it was who had declared it *expedient that one Man die for the People*. † What Justice then had JESUS to expect from a Judge, who had previously determin'd his Death? Or what wonder was it, that JESUS, declaring himself to be what he was, the Son of God; the Miscreant should, to accomplish his purpose, affect to *rent his Garment* ‡ with Zeal for God's Honour? It being no new thing for Hypocrites to make the greater external Shew of Religion and Piety the less of it they have in their Hearts. In fact this impious High-Priest, who could shew so much Pomp of Zeal for the Name of

* *Ibid.* 24.

† *Ibid.* 14.

‡ St. MAT.
xxvi. 65.

of God, was not ashamed to deliver-up (in open violation of all the Rules of legislative Justice) the Son of God, to be abused and outrageously insulted by his own Domestics: Who had the insolence some of them, to spit in his divine Face and to buffet him, while Others, blind-folding him, smote his blessed Visage with the Palms of their hands, saying: Prophecy to us Christ who is he who struck thee? * So true is it ge-
 neral speaking, that the best Sample of a Master's Insolence is the Arrogance of his Domestics. And so few are the Exceptions from that common Rule, that the Servants of Great Men are better distinguish'd by the Vices and Outrages they practise after them, than by the Liveries they wear under them.

* Ver. 67,
68.

But what were all these Outrages Affronts and Taunts from *Caiphas's* Servants, in comparison of the more grating Injuries which JESUS at the same time received from his own? Oh *Peter*! Was it not enough that the *Jews* should suborn false Evidence to accuse thy Lord; but Thou, without a Bribe, must add thy voluntary Perjuries to testify against him? Those Witnesses, who sold their Evidence were perjured only in their being venal: They swore to Miracles Christ spoke and wrought: Yet what they swore was true. But *Peter* more perjured than them all preventing every

every Bribe, *began to curse and swear that*

* *Ibid.* 74. *he knew not the Man.* * Ah faint-hearted Disciple! why all this Fear and Shame? Was This of a piece with thy former forwardness to die rather than forsake thy Master? Or was this Master so changed in Manners, that it was become scandalous to have him even for an Acquaintance? Or finally was his Countenance so changed as that thou really could'st not know him?

† ISAIAH
liii. 2, 3,

4

Ah no! What tho', as his Prophet † had foretold, *His former Beauty nor Comeliness were any more to be seen; what tho', become despised and most abject of Men, his Look was, as it were, bidden and contemn'd; what tho', bearing our Infirmities, he appear'd as it were a Leper and stricken by God and humbled; yet was he not alter'd in his Dress: Yet did his seemless Garment*

† S JOHN
xix. 23.

† discover him to thee. Yet did his unvaried Sanctity of Manners manifest him to be that same JESUS, whom thou had'st promised, at the Peril of thy Life, rather to die than desert; tho' all the World be-

|| St. MAT.
xxvi. 33.

sides should forsake him. || Ah! own then PETER that thy triple Denial was the triple Effect of thy Inconstancy. Own

that JESUS knew thee better than thou knewest thyself; when, to check thy presumptive Confidence, he so plainly fore-

§ *Ibid.* 34
75.

told thee: § *before the Cock crow, thou shalt deny me thrice.* Hear how the faithful

Bird,

Bird, with it's reproaching Note bids thee to bewail thy faithless Fickleness. Yes: *Peter* hear'd: *And going-forth wept bitterly.* * But why this *going-forth*? Must * *Ibid.* 75.

JESUS feel the bitter Sting at Heart of this his Primary Apostle's faithless Fall; and yet not have the consolation to see him rise again? Yes: So he himself disposed. Already had he given-up all Comforts upon Earth, and This among the rest. *Peter* too was still in the occasion of his Sin, while he continued in the fatal Court: And therefore must go-forth to weep. For no Repentance can be true, no Tears sincere or fruitful, which do not first set-out with an effectual Removal of the Occasion: And

He, who loves Danger, shall perish in it. † † Eccle. STASTIC. iii. 27.

Or rather let me say with equal Truth: *Peter* was penitent; but *Peter* still was weak, and wanted fortitude of mind publicly to repair the public Scandal he had brought upon his Lord by publicly disowning him. O wretched wretched Weakness of human Heart! How ready, how bold with *Peter* to sin in public! How fearful, how ashamed with *PETER* to weep in public the Scandal given! Ah 'tis too general a Case with Christians! How many of them glory in the public Scandal they bring upon the Name and Faith of Christ, by their unchristian Manners! How very rarely do we see the true relenting Convert, who

who blushes not to give God Glory in as open a Reparation of his honour? Hence the source perhaps of so many and such repeated Relapses. All are for repenting in private with *Peter*: None for the public Repentance of a *Publican* or *Magdalen*. And therefore perhaps is it that we rarely see Repentances so sincere, so fervent, or so lasting as theirs were.

Well Saviour of the World! If thou art to meet with no more Justice at this Judge's Bar, than thou has't hitherto found; it is time to move hence. Yes the Cause of the Poor may easily change Tribunal; but seldom meets with ought but Oppression at any. From *Caiphas* then JESUS is transmitted to *Pilate*, * and from *Pilate* to *Herod*, † who, disappointed of the Ostentation of Miracles he expected to find in the Divine Criminal, construes his Reserve and Silence into Folly. For in the Courts of earthly Princes to lie; to deceive; to circumvent with the Tongue; to rise, by imposition, on the Ruin of a Companion; to advance, by Flattery, in the favour of the Prince or the Patron is the Wisdom in vogue. But to love Truth, to be inoffensive, to keep a prudent reserve on the Mouth is downright Folly. And therefore is JESUS sent back again by *Herod* to *Pilate* drest in a white Garment, the Type in those times of a Fool or an Idiot.

* S. LUKE

xxiii. 1.

† *Ibid.* 7.

Idiot. * Poor JESUS! where are thy Sor- * *Ibid.* 11.
 rows to end, which are here but com-
 mencing? Alas with the change of thy
 Dress thou ar't not to change Usage, or
 ar't to change it for worse. What, tho'
 the candor of thy Garment be an Em-
 blem of thy Innocence? What can Inno-
 cence avail at a Court, but to draw upon
 thee the more cruel Oppression? *Pilate*
 has a Court: *Pilate* too is a Politician.
 And ah! how rarely do Politicians ever
 form a Scheme which is not the Oppres-
 sion of some Innocent? Nay which is not
 in some sense a Condemnation of God?
 Nevertheless our politic President would
 fain set Christ at liberty; not so much
 from any zeal of righting the Injured and
 ministering Justice to the Opprest as be-
 cause he is puzzled, so extremely puzzled
 to find even a plausible plea to condemn
 him, that he is forced in public to avow
 his perplexity: *I find no Cause in this Man.* † *Ibid.* 4.
 † No, truly: No Cause either of Con- S JOHN
 demnation or Trial: On the reverse, *He* XIX. 4.
knew that the Chief Priests for envy had
deliver'd him. ‡ Why then oh *Pilate,* † St. MAT.
 do'st thou not set JESUS at liberty? Yes XXVII. 18.
Pilate would gladly do so; could he make
 it agree with his worldly Pursuits; could
 he do it without risk of being misrepres-
 ented to *Cesar* and losing his Interest with
 him. Oh how many political *Pilates* don't

we daily see, who would gladly set JESUS at liberty in the Release of an insolvent Debtor, in the just Recompense of the hired Labourer, in the Forgiveness of a persecuted Enemy; did it but suit with their Passions, Pleasures and Interests! But when was there ever any good Understanding between the Maxims of Christ and the Maxims of the World? Never, no never: Nor can there ever be. There is no serving *two Masters* at once. There is no reconciling the Interests of Heaven with those of the Earth; nor those of Christ with those of *Pilate*. If you will be Friends with Christ; you will soon be declared *no Friends to CESAR*. * *Pilate* however resolves on a Trial of his Skill; and, to save that Life which JESUS so despised, robs him of (what is dearer to him than Life) his Honour and Dignity, by putting him in comparison with an infamous Felon.

* S JOHN
xix. 12.

At the same time of year, it was customary for the President to gratify the People with the liberty of freeing some Criminal adjudged guilty of Death; and an old Offender *Barabbas* by Name, notorious for the number as well as blackness of his Crimes was actually in Prison. This then does *Pilate* pitch upon to couple with JESUS: Imagining that the Deformity of the Comparison might render the Divine Criminal less odious to the People. But ah
how

how vain is their Attempt, who think, by doing Evil, to effect some Good! No, no: Where Malice, Craft and servil Views once seize the Heart; there is seldom any difference made between Virtue and Vice, between Innocence and Guilt; unless it be to give the Latter the preference. *Whom will you then, cries the time-serving Judge, that I release to You; Barabbas, or JESUS who is called CHRIST? ** And where was the wonder to hear the deceived Multitude cry-out: “Not him, whom you have “ named last, but BARABBAS?” † Where was the Wonder, I say, when, after having been practised upon by the Priests and the Leaders of their Party, they find *Barabbas* to be the first on the President’s List? *Whom will you that I release to you Barabbas or JESUS?* Trivial then as this seeming Oversight may appear in itself, the Consequences shew how criminal such Mistakes are, in those, who, presiding, ought to use every Caution not to misguide the Judgment of those they preside over. For from such Errors, too often maliciously premeditated in Elections, whether politic or Religious, it often follows, that the Worthless are prefer’d and the Worthy set aside; it often follows, that Ignorance, Impudence, Folly, Vice and factious Ambition are advanced, to crush Knowledge, Modesty, Sense, and guileless Merit. Oh

*St. MAT.
xxvii. 17.

† S. JOHN
xviii. 40.

Christian Electors! How often are your Votes, even in religious Affairs, misguided by the like Party-Rage, Passion, Malice, and baser Motives which actuated this fordid Populace? JESUS was innocent and in that unlike the *Jews*: No wonder then, that, with such previous Biases, they should postpone him to *Barabbas*, who was a Thief, a Traitor, a Sower of public Discord, a Header of Sedition, in short, a factious flagitious Knave a Murderer of his Brethren's Lives and Characters, * and therefore the more like themselves. Oh Shocking Choice! Oh Election of all Injuries the most injurious to JESUS. And yet how often is not it imitated nay improved upon by Christians, who, not content with preferring the Will of this powerful Man, of that beautiful wanton Woman, of this other Sinner, to that of JESUS, prefer their very Passions and Crimes to the Person itself of JESUS. "*Not him but Barabbas*, they cry; whenever he is set in competition with a favorit Sin. What have I to do with my sacramented God; now this Post has offer'd, now that Beauty invites." Ah *Barabbas*, *Barabbas* is the Word: Christians! *Not Christ but Barabbas*.

This Scheme then defeated, to what Stratagem shall *Pilate* have recourse, to save JESUS? Why—My Blood creeps chilling along

* S MAT.

xxvii. 16.

S MARK

xv. 7.

S LUKE

xxiii. 19,

25.

S JOHN

xviii. 40.

along my Veins and my very Soul shudders but to relate it! Grown cruel in Compassion, to rescue his guiltless Prisoner from one Death, he puts him to the Torture of a thousand. In short he takes him and has him inhumanly scourged. *Pilate*, says the Evangelist, *took JESUS and scourged him.* *

* S JOHN
xix. 1.

Ah how many, like *Pilate*, scourge JESUS with the barbarous Piety of their servil Complaisances, in numberless venial Sins; who soon after like *Pilate*, are thence drawn-in to give him to Crucifixion with mortal Ones! Oh Christians! Believe me, there is no making honourable or safe terms with Sin. The Fortrefs, which once parleys deliberately with that Tyrant, will sooner or later be reduced to surrender at discretion. But! What said I? Or what do I hear? *Pilate took JESUS and scourged him.* What unheard of Baseness was this of the President, to break-out into such unprovoked Fury against the sacred Person of Christ; and, after acting the part of a corrupted Ruler, to become a relentless Butcher? *Pilate took JESUS and scourged him?* Oh Grandees! Rulers! Parents! Masters, Guardians, and Heads of Civil or Domestic Government! How don't I tremble more for You than even for *Pilate*! *Pilate took JESUS and scourged him?* Let me see! *Pilate*, during the Flagellation of Christ, remain'd all the while quiet within his Palace;

Palace; too distant from his sacred Person to be able to hurt him with a finger. What then? Still were those Ruffians scourging our Saviour with the Arm of *Pilate*: Or rather let me say, *Pilate* was all the while scourging JESUS CHRIST with the Weapons and Hands of every one of them. Every Crime, committed by the Direction or Connivance of the head, is the Crime of the head. Not only Subjects but even the Sins of Subjects too often pay Tribute to their Superiors: And as these generally speaking lay Claim to the chief Disposal of their Persons and Wills; so too have they commonly the largest Share in their Guilt. You, Oh Gentry, think you do not scourge Christ, because taken-up with your Devotions, you generally prefer your Oratory to a Ridotto, your Prayers to a Play. But who knows, that your Domestics, your Dependents, are not scourging JESUS CHRIST with their Irregularities, which you take so little thought to look into, and so little Pains to reform. You, oh Masters of Families, think, you never scourge him; because you are not only diligent at the public Service of Mornings and Evenings on days of Obligation, but forever on your Knees at prayer, or on your feet in an ill-timed Search of erroneous Sinners to convert them: But who knows that your starving Wife and Children
are

are not scourging him with their Murmurings for want of that Bread, which your Industry in your Station should earn them? Who knows that your Family will not one day first scourge and then crucify him through the gross Ignorance and wants of Education and common Necessaries to which your lazy Zeal exposes them; by your renouncing your real Vocations to the edifying others by a pious Industry in your own Profession, and loitering away your time in a shameful Usurpation of the Office, not your own, of preaching and disputing? You, oh Mothers and Mistresses of Families, you too foolishly flatter yourselves that you never scourge Christ, because forsooth with a Book of Piety in hand, you are forever screening yourselves, in some Chapel or Closet, from those Cares which make-up one essential Part of your Duty. But how often are your Children scourging Christ in your Absence with Sins which your mistaken Tenderness rather indulges them in than corrects them for? How frequently do the disorderly Riots of your Domestics heap scourges on Christ by the favour of your indolent Piety? How often do you provoke your Husbands to scourge JESUS CHRIST with their Anger their Oaths and their Imprecations, while you, leaving your houses in every Disorder (to go hear a Sermon you are unfit

unfit to profit by; to go seek an Indulgence you are unworthy to gain;) are losing yourselves in the corner of a Church, at the foot of some Altar? You, Oh Servants, imagin, you never scourge your Lord, if you can steal away from your Work to hide yourselves in a Church, or place of Piety. What, tho' I'll suppose You never make it a Pharisaic pretext to pay your loitering Visits, or sinful Rendez-vous; What tho' I'll suppose you spend all the time you are absent, in hearing more public Prayers than one, in hearing Sermons, or running after God's Ministers; Know you not that your time is not your own? Know you not that, once your Superiors do their Duty in allowing you the necessary leisure to do your public Devotions to God and receive the requisit Instructions, all the time you waste besides without their Consent is a real Robbery? Know you not that all the rest of your time should be employed in your private Devotions, and that your private Devotions should consist in the sanctifying the menial Works they require at your hands and pay you for? And if your abusing their indulgence in that particular, should provoke them to Wrath, to Oaths and indecent Passions; if it should induce them to straiten those necessary Liberties with Others after you, who might make a better use of them; if it should incense them into that impious way

way of thinking,—of preferring the Service of those who are Strangers to God to the Household of Faith; they indeed will scourge Christ and that severely too. But you, who are the Original Causes, will be the severest Scourgers. Yes, yes, oh dearest Part of Christ Flock! You, oh serving Christians! Believe me: Not out of Contempt, but out of the first-born tenderness I have for you, I must tell you, that, if you indulge such Practices, you are losing your time and losing yourselves. For 'tis not Devotion, but the Prostitution of it; 'Tis not assisting at Prayers, but skulking from Work: 'Tis not going to Sermons but gadding under pretext of them: 'Tis not seeking Priests for Instruction, but running after them from a Spirit of Gossipry: Finally if it be not a direct Flagellation of Christ with your own Hands; it is obliquely scourging him with the hands of Others. Oh how many Christians, in every Station of life, foolishly deceiving themselves wash their hands with *Pilate* and say after him, * *I am innocent of the Blood of this just Man*: Whereas Christ all the while owes to None more than to them the cruel Butchery of his Flagellation!

But ah Christians! let us leave that unnatural Office to his barbarous Executioners. If Christ must be thus ill-treated,

Z

let

*St. MAT.
xxvii. 24.

The PASSION of our LORD

let him not be ill-used by us his Friends; Leave that to his profest Enemies. Too effectually in fact have they done it: And oh how cruelly! One thing however we have to console us: That those Monsters could not be more eager to torment Christ than he was to suffer. He himself advances chearful to the fatal Pillar: He himself strips off his Garment: He himself stretches forth his lovely Arms to the ignoble Cords prepared to tie him: He himself, emboldening the heartless Tyrants to begin their Office in the Words of the royal Psalmist, * *I am prepared for Scourges*; steps-in between the Anger of his eternal Father, and Mankind, against whom his Scourge was lifted-up upon the point to strike. Thus, often shall you see a tender Mother step-in, between her guilty Son and angry Husband, to ward the Blows the Parent levels at the Child, and make her Body a Shield to defend him. But now the Ruffians begin to shower down the merciless Strokes: Now from his precious Frame not Drops but Streams of Blood gush forth at every turn of Scourge. Think, Christians, think you hear the sounding Stripes upon his sacred Flesh, Stripe upon Stripe, too quick to count like the repeated Peals of rattling Thunder. What Shouts the Rabble make at every bolder Stroke! Their Hatred enhanced by their Cruelty chose
for

* PSALM
XXXVII. 18.

for the bloody Purpose a specious Court closely crowded with Soldiers, who (divided into Bands to relieve one-another and take their turns in the barbarous Sport) tired their Arms before they tired their Cruelty in tormenting him. No measure was used in the Number of Lashes, no rule in the Choice of the Weapons, no Exceptions made against Switches, knotted Cords, or Rods of Briar and Thorn. In short to such inhuman Excess did their Fury extend that at length for want of room to open fresh Sores, "they tortured " to excess not his Limbs but his Wounds," as St. Cyprian beautifully expresses it: And what the Holy JOB, * say'd allegorically of his own Body, JESUS might literally say of his. *They have pour'd forth my Bowels upon the Earth: They have cut me with Wound upon Wound.* So that we are not so much to consider his blessed Frame as mangled and disfigured with Wounds; but rather as one continued Wound. But what shall I add to describe him to you, in this barbarous Passage, after what I have said? unless it be that, from the sole of the Foot to the crown of the Head, he had not a whole Place in his Flesh.

* Chap:
xv. 15, 16.

But stay your Rage, Ye; what shall I call you? — Men? No: Savages! Tygers! Monsters! Suspend a while your barbarous
Z 2 Fury;

The PASSION of our LORD

Fury; and let us see, if any Pity may be shewn to JESUS. Methinks my Wishes have recall'd that cruel Period to my view; and I stand pleading for my Saviour to his Parent's Mercy. Father eternal! Who is it, whom I now contemplate thus ill-treated? Is it not thy dear, thy innocent, and only-begotten Son? "Yes (methinks the heavenly Father answers) my Son he is. "But then he is thy Victim, thy Sin-Offering, loaded and overwhelm'd with "thy Enormities. Strike therefore Executioners: Strike-on as bold as ever." But oh eternal GOD of Mercies! Has he not bled enough as yet for Evils not his own? Were it not time to put an End to so much savage Cruelty. "Ah yes! It "would, it might, it should be time to "end it; would Men once think it time "to put an end to sinning" Oh GOD of my heart! Is there no more required then to rescue JESUS from his Anguish? Ah stay the barbarous Butcher-hands! Let them no more lift-up their sacrilegious arms to strike that bleeding Innocent! Command them to unloose the horrid knot which keeps him bound and fet my JESUS free. Behold both me and all this contrite Audience, join'd in Sentiment, grieved from our Souls that ever we have scourged him with our Crimes or those of Others: And for the Love of thee and him and thy
eternal

eternal Love, resolved we are, through your all-powerful Grace, rather to die the sharpest Death than ever scourge him more. Oh my dear Auditors! Were we but steadily resolved on this; how happy might not we be! How might not we heal-up all the Sores of JESUS! And how would not every Sore he felt rejoice him still! But alas! And with what Shame and Terror am not I seized when I think of it! This is a Resolution taken every Year on this holy Day, and a Resolution every Year broken within a few days after. And ah to our Confusion I see and am forced to own, that Christianity, enter'd-in upon the Rage of Gentilism and the Fury of the Synagogue with improvements of Perfidy, still continues to scourge JESUS CHRIST. The Thought is St. *Augustin's*: Take it therefore in his own Words. " Ah! With daily Crimes, says the Saint, we scourge our Lord over again." 'Tis not however that JESUS is any longer exposed to feel the weight of our Scourges. No: He is now impassible; and in himself can no more suffer: But then for that no thanks are due to us. As often as we repeat those Crimes for which he once endured the Scourge; still do we so often scourge him over-again, as much as in us lies. Thus I unworthiest of his Ministers how often have not I scourged him: How often do
not

not I still continue to scourge him, with the Scandals I have given, and (still tho' undesignedly) may give! How often don't we all more or less scourge him, with our Irreverences at the Altar to his precious Body and Blood; with our Omissions towards his mystic Body the Flock committed to our Charge; and with our little Breaches of Charity one towards another! You, oh Nobility! How frequently don't you scourge JESUS CHRIST, with the Heaven-defying Pride of your arrogant, over-bearing, all-crushing Thoughts? With the dissolute Extravagancies which urge so many of you to the oppression of your Tenants; to the Ruin of your Creditors; to the Exasperation of your Domestics and Dependants; to the Contempt, or at least Neglect; of those Poor, over whom Providence appointed you not Tyrants but Stewards? And finally with the Luxury and other fashionable Follies and Vices, which, step by step, soften your Constitutions into Rotteness and Impotence; and often-times gradually harden your Consciences to Apostacy and Impenitence? You, oh Men of Trade! How generally don't you scourge your Lord, with your Frauds Impositions and Extorsions enhanced with the many (oh how many!) Lies Imprecations and Perjuries, you never make a scruple of? You, O Revengeful, with the rancour of
your

your Resentment? You, oh Sensualists, with your Obscenities? You, oh Men in general, with the untold Variety of your anti-christian Disorders? And you, oh Women, with the ensnaring Vanity of your Dresses and Airs, or the murderous Lash of your Scandal-spreading Tongues? Ah! let us generally confess one humble, melancholy Truth: I; You; all of us, every day, more or less, are guilty of the Flagellation of Christ. Yes, "ah! With daily Crimes we scourge our Lord over again." But what strange Souls are ours then? Are we Men, or rather are we Furies? Oh Dearest Fellow Christians! That JESUS would consent to be cruelly scourged for us, was surely an infinitely sweet Excess of Clemency. But that we should basely resolve to have him scourged by us, were an Excess of——what shall I call it? Do you find out the Term to express it.

Ah my Dearest JESUS! What Christian can have the heart (or rather so far want a heart) to scourge thee over-again, who once beholds thee in Spirit, loosen'd from the fatal Pillar and fallen fainting on the ground, half drown'd in thy own Gore? But JESUS, methinks, rising from that Pool of his own Blood, launches thence to the Borders of thy Heart, oh Christian, and sues for admittance. To Every-one of you
apart,

apart, I speak, Beloved. Methinks I hear
 him in a languid half-expiring Tone thus
 pleading with your Soul: " Oh my dear
 " Soul! Dear purchase of my tenderest
 " Affections! To thee I address these faint
 " Remains of a Voice, once so enchant-
 " ing, to tell thee, that all the Pains I
 " now endure, I only endure for thee,
 " Number over, if thou can'st do it, all
 " my Sores; these on my Back; these
 " others on my side; these on my Breast
 " and Stomach; and these too which have
 " penetrated to my very Bowels and Heart.
 " See how, as my Prophet had foretold,
 " * *Sinners*, and you among the rest, *have*
 " *built upon my back*; inasmuch as *they*
 " *have prolong'd their Iniquity*. And know,
 " if you cannot number them, that of
 " all this numberless heap of Sores they
 " have built upon me, their is not one,
 " which was not borne for thy Salvation:
 " Some to cleanse thee of thy Impurities:
 " Some to atone for thy Revenges; and
 " All to satisfy for all thy Sins. Oh dearest
 " Spouse! Can'st thou want greater Sig-
 " nals of my Love? Do I, after all this
 " ask too much in asking thee to love me?
 " Of thousands of Sores which call upon
 " thee for a return of Love, shall not one
 " single one be heard? Ah, if still thou
 " can'st not love me; if still thou has't
 " in view some Creature more lovely in
 " thy

* PSALM

CXXVIII. 3.

" thy Eye than this thy Saviour thus dis-
 " figured for the Love of thee; at least
 " vouchsafe to pity, him thou can'st not
 " love, and do not triumph over so much
 " Blood! Throughout this cruel Series of
 " Tortures, for thy loved sake, I ask'd
 " not Mercy of my eternal Father. 'Tis
 " now I ask it of thy heart. Ah refuse
 " it not then! Ah spare henceforth this
 " Rest of Blood and Flesh; and open not
 " fresh Sores in my heart, with new Of-
 " fences! Remember; 'tis your God is
 " speaking to you: 'Tis your Saviour who
 " is pleading with you?" Christians! What
 say to all this? Can you be deaf to
 the Voice of this Divine Charmer, charm-
 ing so sweetly? Can you resist the Elo-
 quence of so much Blood? Can you per-
 sist unmoved at the Sight of such and so
 many Wounds? If you can; the infernal
 Regions have no Inflexibility of Guilt, no
 Obduracy of Heart, which may compare
 with yours.



ELL, Beloved Brethren. What
 do you think of JESUS? Your
 JESUS scourged? Your JESUS all-
 over bloody? Your JESUS all-
 over Bruises, Wounds and Sores? Not Cai-
 phas (as once of old, *) is questioning ^{*St. MAT. xxvi. 66.}
 the Jews: But I unworthy Minister of
 JESUS ask you: *What think you of Christ?*

A a

What

What think you of his Executioners? Has he not suffer'd, think ye, enough at present? Or can they, do you think, augment their Cruelty? Surely not? Surely the fresh Stir, which, methinks, they make about him is the Emotion of returning Pity awaken'd in them by the Voice of so much innocent Blood as they have shed? Courage then relenting Soldiers! Strip JESUS gently: Strip him anew, to apply some healing Balm to the Sores you have made. Without hearts of Steel, it is impossible for you to restrain your Tenderness at the Sight of such Wounds, in view of such Anguish. But ah! What hopes were there that any Pity should be shewn to JESUS? Too truly were their Hearts more obdurate than Steel. They stripp'd him indeed, but with such cruel Violence; that, tearing-off his Garments already glued to his congeal'd Sores, they open'd them all afresh with the exquisitest Smart, and thus renew'd in one bloody Act the whole Torture of his Flagellation. Grown wanton in their Rage, that they might be pompously cruel; they had recourse to Ingenuity; and, renouncing to every Instrument of Smart made use of by the Barbarity of former Ages, invented one which might make all Posterity shrink with Horror: And plaiting a

*St. MAT. xxvii. 29. Crown of seventy two enormous Thorns, *
they forced them into his sacred Head and
Temples

Temples with the weight of a Club. What Eloquence shall I make use of, Christian Hearers, or what Rhetoric can be needful, to express the Excess of Anguish which Jesus must have indured from this so unheard of a Diadem? Surely you have not lived to these Years, not to know, how sensible the Head is to every the least Pleasure or Pain? Whenever that suffers, for little it suffers, the whole Man must languish. But little it cannot suffer: For that, which, in any other less noble Part, would be Pain, in the Head is Spasm; is Agony; and a Fortaste of Death. In That is the Seat of Life; in That are an almost infinit Variety of Nerves and Veins and Arteries; and That keeps-up so perpetual and intimate a Correspondence with the Heart, that it never can smart without plunging the Heart into the deepest Distress. *Eusebius* in his History tells us that one single Thorn lodged in the foot of a Lion sent him furious about the Deserts, with the Rage of the Pains: Shaking the very Woods and rending the very Skies with the Loudness of his Roar. Ah! Guess you then, Christians, what Anguish the tender Jesus must have felt from, not one single Thorn, but a kind of Bush of Thorns all around deeply piercing and torturing his sacred Head and Temples. Ah! Let us say and we shall say but Truth,

that this cruel Crown of Thorns gave **JESUS** as many Deaths as it had points, which, martyrizng without totally killing, plunged him in a Sea of the bitterest Distress. But oh Heavens! Man, wretched Man crown'd with Roses, and the Lord of Angels with Thorns? What shall we say to so preposterous a Treatment? How shall we account for such a horrid inversion of Order?

It is the usual Practice for a Heroe who has gain'd any signal Victory over the Public Enemy to be carried in Public Triumph, with the very Sword in his hand with which he overcame in the Battle. The Malediction then which after the Transgression of *Adam*, was laid on the whole Race of Men importing among other Chastisements that the Earth should yield them a continual Harvest of Thistles and Thorns: Therefore did the Divine **JESUS**, conquering with the Torture of his Thorns the Malediction of Human Nature, chose triumphantly to have those cruel Thorns on his sacred Head; and to bear them in the Form of a Crown: Meaning thereby to shew us that what the impious Cruelty of his Adversaries intended for a ludicrous Torture was in reality a Diadem of Victory and the Mark of his amorous Triumph. But oh the costly Triumph! Oh the Bloody Diadem! To behold from every side of that sacred
Head

Head and Temples the gushing Blood,
 streaming in Rivulets, there through those
 lovely Locks, here down this blessed Face
 to enrich the Earth, and clotting partly,
 as it stream'd, upon that venerable Beard;
 to behold all this endured by thee for my
 sake; how can I forbear, my JESUS to cry-
 out in Transports of the tenderest Love and
 Pity: *Ab: A Spouse of Blood indeed ar't*
thou to me. * Ah! What shall I return
 to thee, my lovely Spouse, for all which
 thou has't lavish'd upon me? What Re-
 turns shall I make thee for this precious
 generous Compact of Blood, with which
 thou has't wedded thyself to my Soul; in
 which thou has't given me so strong a
 Proof of thy stupendous Love? Tell me
 then, my Love: Who put this bloody
 Crown upon thy Blessed Head? But why
 do I ask? Ah 'twas the Hatred of Sacri-
 legious Hands, I know which pierced thy
 tender Flesh: But then, it was the wounded
 Love which languish'd in thy Heart, that
 drew from thence so large a Waste of
 Blood. And still, methinks, I hear that
 bleeding Love, in amorous Complaints,
 cry-out to mine and every Christian's Soul:
Thou has't wounded my heart, my Sister
Spouse; Thou has't wounded my heart! †
 Oh then sweetest Object of my Love! Oh
 that I might but heal the Wounds I have
 made! Oh that I knew but how to blunt
 the

* EXOD.
 iv. 25.

† CAN-
 TIC. iv. 9.

* LA-
MENT. II.
13.

the sting of those sharp-pointed Thorns! But, alas, too truly are thy Sorrows, like a Sea without Strand; a wide and tempestuous Ocean without any Shore. Yes, as thy Prophet *Jeremiah* foretold, *Great is thy Affliction, like the Sea, who shall heal thee?* * From us at least, what relief could'st thou ever expect? From us who have so much less Talent to heal than malice to wound thee?

And yet there is a way still left to heal JESUS; would Christians but resolve on it. But if the first Consolation of the Afflicted be to have a Companion in their Distress; ah what Comfort, what healing Succour are we qualified to administer to this our wounded Love? We who delight so much in ease, and are so wedded to our Pleasures? We who break-out into such vehemence of Resentment against our very Director, if, like a skilful prudent Surgeon, he attempt to stop the spreading Gangrene in our Conscience by a timely application of Fire and Steel? We who tremble at the bare Thought of Penance, and revolt at the sole mention of those long-forgotten Means of Satisfaction—Cilices, Hair-Cloths, Disciplins, Fasts and Wormwood? Ah wounded JESUS then! *Who shall heal thee?* Shall our Eyes distill, in tears of true Compunction, a salutary balsom to assuage thy Smart? Ah! What relief

relief can our inconstant tears afford thy
dolorous Sores, which our repeated Sins
still gall afresh? Who then, wounded
Love? Once more, *who shall heal thee?*
Christians, I say again: There is a way to
heal-up every Wound of JESUS; if you
will but take Grace and Courage to make
use of it. The way is, to reform your
Manners, to break-off your Criminal Prac-
tices, to moderate the Excesses in your
Dress, at your Tables, in your Equipages,
and suit your Expences better to your Cir-
cumstances, to the Calls of your Family
and the Cries of the Poor. The way is,
to mortify that vicious itch of lying, swear-
ing, gaming, tricking. The way is, to
brow-beat and put down that shameful
Custom of talking in double-meaning
Words or Phrases; and, to flee as from
a Pest, from those licentious Conversations,
which even the more reserved Sex too
often now 'o days blush not to bear a part
in. Be rigorous in the Discouragement of
Vice: Be liberal in the countenancing Vir-
tue and Industry. Be slow to Censure,
prompt to Praise, where Merit calls upon
you for it. Be ready to redress the
Wrongs you have done, and ready to for-
give the Wrongs you suffer. Judge for
the Widow, support the Orphan's Rights,
and be Protectors of the Poor and Absent.
Let No-One's Reputation suffer by your
Tongue;

Tongue; No-One's Person suffer by your Wish; No-One's Substance suffer by your hands. Merchants and Tradesmen! Be nicely honest in your Dealings. Debtors! Be strictly just to all your Creditors. Creditors! Be tender to your insolvent Debtors. Parents! Guardians! Executors! Trustees! Servants! Be faithful Each to your several Trusts. Christians, All! Love Justice and do Mercy: Flee from Sin; flee from the Occasions of it; and stand not with such presumptive Confidence upon the Border of that Precipice. In short, break with the World once for all; break with it in good earnest; and resolutely throw yourselves into the Arms of Jesus. Thus shall you heal-up all his Wounds at once. And oh how effectually! Oh with what joy to him! Oh with what advantage to yourselves! But alas, thus to succour JESUS which of ye all has the heart? Thus to rejoice JESUS for a Constancy where is the Christian truly resolved?

Well then, heartless Christians, if you will not resolve to relieve your Lord by your Repentance; release him at least from your Insults. Let him no longer appear before you unpitied. Shut your Eyes to the rest of his Sufferings: Stop your Ears to the rest of this Recital: And you who are resolved to do nothing for the Love of him, quit the place ere I relate any thing

thing more of the much he did for you; that you may not insult him with the farther Ingratitude of remaining still insensible to all. No sooner was our Divine Sovereign crown'd with his painful Diadem of Thorns, than to aggravate the Affront, the Ruffians put into his hands for a Mock-Scepter a paltry Reed; and cover'd his Sacred Shoulders with a Rag of Purple-Garment; ragged and torne indeed, but not so torne as his blessed Flesh was by the Stripes of Barbarity. In this dolorous and ludicrous Guise, after being again spit-upon smote and sneeringly saluted *King of the Jews*, * He is carried back to *Pilate* to be sentenced to Death. Go then Divine Martyr, go to *Mount Calvary* in search of that Relief, thy Christians want the Heart to give thee. Death there shall put an End to all thy Sorrows, which Nothing in this Life shall mitigate. To Death, then, lovely JESUS! To Death. And you, oh devout Souls, prepare with pitying Sighs to follow him through his painful Pilgrimage, and gather-up the precious blood and sweat he shall shed along the way. But ere he begin his painful Journey view him attentively. Look with an eye of Contemplation to the Tribune of the President, where *Pilate* presenting JESUS to the Populace thus disfigured, thus burlesqued, and at his bleeding Bosom, lifting up the Purple Rag, cries-out to them: LO THE MAN. †

* St. MAT.
xxvii. 29.

† S JOHN
xix. 5.

The PASSION of our LORD

View him then with attention. Behold this Man of Sorrows in his excess of Love and your excess of Guilt. Oh Christians! have you not heard of that eternal WORD and Wisdom of the Father, by whom all things were made, the Heavens, the Earth and all things in them; by whom GOD spoke in his Patriarchs, Prophets, Laws and Wonders. Even this is he: **LO THE MAN!** Have you not heard of that all-gracious Lord, *who when in the form of GOD, thought it no robbery to be himself equal to GOD:* Yet humbled himself for your and my sake, *taking the form of a Servant, made into the likeness of Men and in habit found as Man?*

(a) Who when in this habit and state of Man took upon him all our Infirmities;
 (b) (Sin excepted (c),) lived a lowly, toilsome and penurious Life for thirty years;
 (d) and spent three others in preaching teaching and exhorting Sinners to repent?
 (e) Who cured the Sick of every Malady;
 (f) the Dumb, (g) the Blind, (h) the Lame, (i) the Deaf; (k) raised the Dead;
 (l) chased Devils; (m) commanded the Winds and Waves; (n) and walk'd upon the Waters as upon dry land; (o) Ah **LO**

(a) PHILIPP. ii. 6, 7.

(b) St. MAT. viii. 17.

(c) HEB. iv. 15.

(d) St. LUKE iii. 23.

(e) St. MARK i. xv.

(f) St. MAT. iv. 23, 24.

(g) St. MARK vii. 35.

(b) St. MAT. ix. 30.

(i) St. JOHN v. 8, 9.

(k) St. MARK vii. 35.

(l) St. JOHN xi. 44.

(m) St. MAT. xv. 28.

(n) St. LUKE viii. 25.

(o) St. MAT. xiv. 25.

THE

THE MAN! And would you have thought that the very People for whom he did all this, who were Witnesses to all this, who reap'd the benefit of all this, should plot together to destroy him as a common Enemy; should apprehend him as a Felon; should bear false Witness against him; should blindfold, buffet, beat and bruise him; should spit-upon him, scourge him, crown him with Thorns and ridicule him? Would you have thought that the very Judge who found and declared him innocent should cause him to be so disfigured that he who once was *beauteous in form above the Children of Men*, * had neither Beauty nor Comeliness left (as his Prophet foretold †) nor scarce the Figure of a Man? And yet it was even so: LO THE MAN! Behold him then in your excess of Guilt. Behold him such as your Crimes and mine have made him: His reverend Head quite bare; his lovely Locks dishevel'd; his heavenly Face (if Face that can be call'd where Features are not to be distinguish'd for dirt and cuts, and spittle, blood and bruises) all wan and pale; his sprightly Eyes bedimm'd with faintness; his precious Cheeks sunk-in; his sacred Beard irreverently torne; his blessed Temples streaming with the blood, his cruel crown of Thorns had forced so many Passages for; his venerable Shoulders cover'd with a slim-

* PSALM
xliv. 2.

† ISAIAH
liii.

sey Rag of Purple, which (without sheltering his Sores) added Mockery to his Anguish; his guiltless Hands tied with an ignoble Cord and holding a Reed of ridicule in form of Scepter; with Ropes of infamy around his Waist, about his Neck, and fasten'd to his Arms, as if to hinder the celestial voluntary Captive from running away, whom sacrilegious Cruelty had already made incapable of standing unless upheld. Thus in your excess of Guilt, **LO THE MAN**, Such as your Crimes and mine had made him! And if you think, that he deserved such usage from our hands forbear to shed a tear. Yet ah! what is all this but a faint Image of my suffering Saviour? Rather then behold him in his excess of Love. His Love for you was infinit: And that infinit Love favour'd the Invention of Barbarity, that it might make the more cruel Havock of him. Guess you then, if finite Minds can guess, how infinit, how inexpressible his Torture must be; when promoted by the immense Desires of an infinit Affection. Ah Christians! think, you hear the Voice of his Mercy, through every bleeding Pore of lovely JESUS, crying out to you in the Words of his Prophet: * *Ob all ye, who pass along the way! attend and see, if there be Sorrow like to my Sorrow. Hear, I say; Hear as well as see your afflicted Lord, crying-out to you from*

* JEREM.
LAMENT.
i. 12.

from every painful Limb, and calling on you for Compassion, Say then what will you have done to this Man of Sorrows? On your Decision depends his being henceforth set free from future Insults of repeated Crimes; or being again mystically nail'd upon the Cross by your fresh Offences. But ah! Still among Christians there are Wretches so abandon'd, that their Actions cry-out daily with the *Jews*, CRUCIFY HIM: CRUCIFY HIM. Oh Souls redeem'd with the precious blood of Christ is it thus you treat your loving Saviour? Shall your King be crucified again, by your Perversity? Oh stubborn Sinners! Oh Profligates, more obstinate, more devil-like than *Judas*! He when he saw his Master taken condemn'd himself and cried: *I have sinn'd, betraying just Blood*. And shall Christians meditate on his approaching Death and still persist resolved anew to crucify him with their Sins? *Judas* gave-up the ill-gotten Money for which he consented to betray his Lord. And (oh Heavens!) Christians for every paltry Lucre are daily ready to give-up Christ again to Crucifixion. Ah! where is the Christian, who, melted with the Pains of JESUS, tries to rescue him with one *Peccavi*, one *I have sinn'd*? Where is the contrite heart which, throwing itself at JESUS's feet, sanctifies the Words of the infatuated Multitude, and says

says with true Compunction: Oh my Divine Lord! Oh bloody Spouse as thou art to me! Be to me indeed *a Spouse of Blood*: And let thy precious Blood be upon us and
 * SMAT. our Children, * to cleanse us from our former Guilt, to create in us a clean Heart, and preserve us from future Offences? Go then Divine Object of human Barbarity; and since Christians as well as *Jews* will have a hand in thy Crucifixion, go seek on *Mount Calvary* that Death which the iniquitous Judge has condemn'd thee to. If Cruelty has harden'd the hearts of Christians into the Insensibility of Stone; the Rocks, as heretofore, shall render homage to thy solem Sorrows and be all heart to burst with pity on thee.



JESUS then at length is dismiss'd out of Court: And judge You, ambitious Worldlings, what advantages they have to expect at a Court, who are resolved not to part with their Innocence: Judge, *I say*, by what JESUS gain'd there. In the little time he appear'd in the Palace of *Pilate*, he left there his Beauty, his Ease, his Strength and his Health: He left there his Blood his Spirits and whole Pieces of his sacred Flesh. He left there his Dignity, his Prerogatives, his Honour and Reputation. And what did he bring from thence? Why
 He

He brought thence a torne mangled disfigured Body: He brought thence Contempt, and Ill-Repute and Pains and Infamy: He brought thence, a Crown of Thorns on his Head, a Halter about his Neck, a heavy Cross on his Shoulders, Executioners before and behind him, a flagitious Thief on each side of him, and a numerous outrageous Populace all around him to kick and beat and drag and shove him along to the Death he himself was so eager to meet. Go now, vain towering Mortals, and seek for the Opportunities of waiting on the Great of this World. Go, Ministers of God, and lose your Time, forfeit your Dignity, depreciate your Character and expose your Conscience with frequent Visits and paying court to the Nobility; who seldom favour but to deceive; seldom smile but to betray; and seldom carels but to ruin. Go, Christians; and pine away in the Anti-Chambers or Closets of the Wealthy and Powerful; and Cameleon-like feed on the airy Diet of a Promise, a courteous Nod, or a pleasant Look; and see what you will find in your hands when you awake from your present illusive Dream. Ah too fatally will you find fulfill'd in you what the Prophet has said of such Slaves to Riches and the Rich: *They have slept their sleep and at last found nothing in their hands,* * but * PSALM lxxv. 6. Vexation and Disappointment. 'Tis even so:

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so: And oh that you did but seriously comprehend it! They who run after the Quality in expectation of advancing their Fortune are trading rather for Disgraces than Advantages; and 'tis a million to one, if, after many a grievous Heart-ach, they receive any better recompense than an insupportable Cross.

Such are the Terms on which JESUS is dismiss'd from the Presence of *Pilate*. After dragging him with merciless fury down the Stairs of the President's Palace, no sooner have the Rabble got him out of it's Gate than they present an enormous Cross to him to bear on his Shoulders to the fatal Place appointed for his Execution. And oh the welcome Object to JESUS's longing Eyes! Not with more anxious eagerness does the Shipwreckt Mariner lay hold on the welcome Plank on which he hopes to escape the Storm and ride in Safety through the boisterous Sea to the Harbour in view, than JESUS embraced with secret Joy that Tree, which was to lift him to Paradise and to draw thither after him a drowning World, saved from a dangerous Wreck. The Butchers then might well have spared their cruel Pains to drag and hale and buffet him along. Hold Wretches, hold! *How long will you set thus violently upon the Man, you are all combined to kill; and run him down as if he was a bending Wall or tottering Edifice?* *

Ah

Ah perfidious Rabble! too glaring was your
base Intent. Fain would you by these Vio-
lences *have depreciated the value* of this so
generous Sacrifice of JESUS, * in making * Ver. 4.
that appear a Force which he had made
his Choice. But vain was all your Craft.
For if his Feet but crept, his Wishes *ran*
in thirst † of dying on the Cross he bore. † *Ibid.*
If he fell and fainted and fell again beneath
the unwieldy burden, the Fault is yours, is
mine: The Fault is wholly ours in adding
to that already too heavy Charge of his the
enormous Weight of our Crimes. For the
rest, not all your Rage could urge him on
so fast as his own Love press'd forward.
And oh how soon did not that Love, in spite
of all his Faintness, hurry him through
the guilty Gates of *Jerusalem*?

But here again poor JESUS falls beneath
his Load: And here, in Complaisance not
to JESUS but to Cruelty, lest the heavenly
Criminal should expire, ere That was fa-
tiated with his Crucifixion; *Simon* the *Cy-
renean*, whose happy Lot conducted him
that way, is pitch'd upon to bear the Cross
of fainting strengthless JESUS to the fatal
Mount. Happy, *I say*: For oh my suffer-
ing Love! oh that it was but granted me
to ease thee of thy Cross and bear it for
thee! But ah too rudely ar't thou taken
up with the Insults, Mockeries and Out-
rages offer'd to thee during this Change

of Scene, for me to address thee, with my contrite Sentiments. Pardon then gentle Lord, if unable to support the Sight of so much Injury done thee, I turn my Eyes a minute towards that unhappy faithless City on which thou has't turn'd thy back, to weep over it as thou didst once, * and pay the tribute of one pitying Tear to it's irrevocable Ruin. JERUSALEM! JERUSALEM; *Which killest the Prophets and stonest them that are sent to thee.* † Go on, senseless City in the riotous Triumph over thy own Downfall. This day thy Wickedness may display the gaudy Banners of Triumph, and rend the Skie with loud Huzzas and mirthful shouts of Victory. For this day thou has't conquer'd: This day thou has't subdued more than a Prophet, the strong-arm'd King of Prophets. But ah take notice: thy Victory is thy Overthrow. And all the Gaieties of Mirth, which Satan this day crowns thee with, are but like the gaudy Trappings of a Heifer, which the Pagan Sacrificer leads to Slaughter. Oh that thou had'st but known, and that in this thy day, the things which appertain to thy Peace! ‡ Oh that thou had'st but known how to receive and treat this Lord of Peace, whom thou has't this day banish'd from thy bosom! *How often would He have gather'd thy Children together as the Hen gathereth together her Chickens under*

* S LUKE
xix. 41.

† S MAT.
xxiii. 37.

‡ S LUKE
xix. 42.

under her Wings; and thou (alas) wouldst not. * What signal solid numberless Proofs * S MAT. Ibid. did not he give thee of his Love? Still did'st thou hate and fear and persecute him as an Enemy: Still did'st thou hunt him down to Death, and scorn the Peace he came to bring thee. And now (alas) that Peace is forever *hidden from thy Eyes.* † Riot † S LUKE Ibid. then, senseless City, riot in thy Ruin. Thy Views are answer'd: JESUS thy only Stay is cast-out from thy Walls: JESUS has turn'd his back on thee forever and left thee to become a Desert. ‡ And still do'st ‡ S MAT. Ibid. 38. thou remain insensible of thy Wretchedness; still unacquainted with thy Loss? Ah know that, in losing JESUS, thou has't lost thy Beauty, Strength and Majesty; lost thy Altars, Temples, Laws and Sacrifice; and lost thy Priesthood, Royalty, and Liberty. *For the Days shall come upon thee; and thy Enemies shall encompass thee with a Trench, and enclose thee about and straiten thee on every side; and beat thee flat to the Ground and thy Children in thee. And they shall not leave in thee a Stone upon a Stone, because* || S LUKE Ibid. 43, 44. *thou has't not known the time of thy Visitation.* || Poor wretched prostrated Sovereign

|| This Prophecy of Christ was accomplish'd forty Years after by the total Destruction of *Jerusalem*, at the same festival time of *Easter* in which Jesus Christ our Lord was crucified. See *Josephus*. Book vii. Chap. 17. and *Eusebius*. Book iii. Chap. 6, 7, 8.

• LA-
MENT. i.
16.

of the Earth! Faithless Helpless City! How do I deplore thee! *Ah therefore am I weeping and my Eye shedding tears, because the Comforter is made far from thee; * because JESUS hath forsaken thee!* But — why lend Tears to the Misery of Others; when perhaps too many in this Audience have their own disgrace to weep over, in the loss of JESUS. For — how many precious Christian Souls, once like triumphant *Salem*, while rich with the Grace of Christ, now that they have banish'd JESUS and his Grace, are, like that abandon'd Capital, become a Prey to Ruin? Alas, what is become of those holy Habits of Christian Grace and Virtue once infused into them? What — of that tenderness of Conscience which kept them so fixt in their Obedience to God's Voice and Inspirations? What — of that Pleasure taken in doing Good, that Fear of Evil, that fervent Love of God? All, all, all with JESUS and his Grace are fled! And his dread Menace is verified in their Souls as in *Jerusalem: Behold your house shall be left desert to You.*

Away then my Saviour from the impious City, to more kindly *Calvary* which soon shall put an end to all thy Injuries. Disburden'd of thy Cross, enjoy the little Respit granted thee, to gather vigour to compleat thy Passion. But what do I say? JESUS indulged some Respit? No: He only

only quitted the burden on his Shoulders to make room in his blessed Breast for a double Load of Anguish. Still—who would have thought, that the eternal Father's rigorous Justice should, to torment his blessed Son, employ his sacred Mother? Divine Redeemer! And was this farther cruel Circumstance still wanting to crown thee the Sovereign of Martyrs, that thy very Mother should come to embitter thy Anguish? When a Man is once at the Approaches of Death; it is the common Office of Compassion to remove from his Eyes, every living Object which was dear to him: Children, Friends, Wife and Mother; all are constrain'd to go shed their Sorrows out of the Patient's Sight; that foreign Woes mayn't add to the Grievance of his own. But even this Indulgence is denied to Jesus: The Rigour of eternal Majesty offended, requiring that the chief created Object of his tenderest Love, his blessed Mother *Mary*, should present herself on his way, and conduct him even to his Cross. But ah turn back most spotless, tenderest of Virgins, turn back. Thy Piety on this occasion is the severest Rigour. Withdraw from before the Eyes of thy already too grievously afflicted Son, and sharpen not his Sufferings with this distressful Encounter. But judge you, Christians, if this tenderest of Mothers can suffer
the

the Life of her Life to be thus inhumanly dragg'd away to Death, and not bid him a last Farewell. No, no: So Heaven ordain'd: They meet. But oh the cruel Pangs this Meeting cost them both! Oh the Tide of Sorrows flowing and reflowing now from the heart of JESUS to MARY; now from the heart of MARY to JESUS: Now through the Eyes of the Son; now through the Eyes of the Mother! Thus does this new Torrent of Affliction rising in the gentle Heart of Christ, and flowing through his Virgin Parent's Eyes, overflow her compassionate Soul with a sympathetic Feeling of all his Sufferings; whence ebbing back from her blessed throbbing Breast to That of her blessed Son, it overwhelms his divine Heart with an enhancement of Grief, in the bitter consideration of her Dolours. To comprehend the excess of Agony this reciprocal correspondence of Grief must have given to Each; we must first be able to form some Idea of the unparallel'd Affection, which subsisted between these two heavenly Personages! But ah who can presume to give the just Idea of a Love which surpass'd, in an unmeasurable degree, every other created Affection? JESUS beholds his Mother, and strait forgets the lesser torments of his Flesh: His Soul collecting itself all into his Eyes to share in her Affliction. *Mary spies-out*
her

her Soul's Delight: And her Affections flying to embrace and cherish him, the modest Maid forgets her Blushes; forgets to tremble in a Croud of Ruffians, She who started once at the Approaches of an Angel. Oh my Divine Son, *cries She!* Oh my beloved Mother, *cries He!* For tho' they were not suffer'd the leisure to converse in Words, and the Language of the Tongue has ever less to say than vehement Love would wish to express; the Eloquence of their Eyes was the faithful Interpreter of Each-other's Hearts. "O my Divine Son
" *(methinks)* *She cries!* how don't thy
" Cross torment me? how don't I feel
" thy Wounds along with thee, in the
" Sympathy of my Grief? how do not
" I regret thee and wish to die with
" thee? *Oh my distressed*
" *fed Mother; Jesus (methinks) makes*
" *answer.* How mutual is our Grief! Ah
" these Wounds, these Sores, these Ropes,
" this Crown of Thorns, that heavy Cross,
" which I so lately bore and which so soon
" shall bear me, all are less painful to me
" than thy Sorrows. But since the Justice
" of my heavenly Father, the Guilt of
" human Nature, and the World's Re-
" demption require that I bear them all,
" 'tis fit that I accomplish this great Work
" and crown my Sufferings with my Death.
" To this End was I born of thee. To
this

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" this End was't thou made a Second *Eve*?
 " the common Mother of the World, by
 " being mine. Consent then chearfully to
 " lose one Child to the Earth; that thou
 " may'st gain a Multitude to Heaven. And
 " suffer me, who breathed my first vital
 " Breath in thy fond Virgin Arms, to yield
 " up my last in the Arms of that Cross,
 " which thereby is to give new Life to
 " human Nature. Farewell then Afflicted
 " Mother, farewell: Still be thyself: Still
 " be the first-born Pattern of created For-
 " titude: Resign me up, as I resign up thee
 " to our eternal common Father: And
 " know that all this Tide of Sorrows soon
 " shall terminate in a Sea of Joys."

" Oh my adored martyr'd Son, *me-*
 " *thinks the dolorous Virgin still replies!*
 " how shall I have the heart to leave
 " thee; by whom alone I live, and in
 " whose Life my Joy is center'd? Is not
 " the Blood which thou thus lavishest the
 " Produce of these Virgin Veins? Ah why
 " then mayn't I mingle it with Tears of
 " Pity from these Parent Eyes? Why was't
 " thou given to me but to cherish and con-
 " sole? But alas! this fatal Day, nor thou
 " desirest, nor can I give thee comfort. Ah
 " suffer then thy Cross to bear us both;
 " and let one Tree receive two Bodies
 " whose Souls and Hearts are one. Too
 " much I prize the plentiful Redemption
 " of

“ of Mankind to ask thee not to suffer, or
 “ yet solicit thee to live. All I request is,
 “ that I may die with Thee, for whose
 “ loved sake I live. Oh Dearest Son!”

Oh Dearest Mother, *JESUS had rejoin'd*:
 But the impious Rabble parts them with
 such sudden Fury, that scarce could they
 licence Each-other with parting Glances:
 If Glances they may be call'd and not ra-
 ther Fires of consuming Anguish, which
 augmenting their mutual Flames, tortured
 their precious Souls with such exquisit Pain
 as, but for their perfect Conformity with
 the Divine Will, must have caused them
 instantly to expire.

Thus the Divine JESUS advances on his
 painful Journey with this fresh Thorn in
 his heart, tormented to the quick with the
 Sight of his Mother's Sorrows; while the
 dolorous Mother advances before him to
 the fatal Place of Execution, with the
 Dagger in her breast of ruminating the Af-
 flictions of JESUS: *Mary* prepared to stand
 beneath his Cross, there to endure by Sym-
 pathy the Death of her Son; and JESUS
 prepared to climb that fatal Tree and with
 the Passion of his Mother to embitter his
 own. Prepare then, Christians, all your
 Recollection to behold (in Spirit) this guilt-
 less Lamb, ascending up the fatal *Mount*.
 But ah! what unusual Reproaches are those

D d

which

* S LUKE
xxiii. 28.

which on a sudden my Saviour is heard to utter to certain pious Women weeping over him? *Daughters of Jerusalem! weep not over me, but weep over yourselves.* * Alas my Saviour! Is this all the Return thou makest to those who pity thee? Is Pity so despiseable from Sinners, that thou rejectest it, even when most in need of it? Ah where is the Distressful Sufferer, besides thyself, who would not wish for Pity in the extremes of Torture? And Thou alone the most distressed of Martyrs still refusest it? No wonder thy Enemies are so bowel-less in thy regard; when Thou art so rigorous to thyself? From the Tears of thy sympathizing Mother thou drewest nought but an addition of Anguish: And from the Tears of these condoling Matrons still dost thou refuse to drink aught but the Gall of afflicting Reflections? *Daughters of Jerusalem weep not over me, but weep over yourselves?* Ah my Saviour! what can this mystic Reprehension mean? It means, beloved Christians, that JESUS can never be pleased with the Tears of those, who stand in need of a Sea of the saltest Tears to bewail their own wretched Lives. The Tears of his blessed Mother, tho' painful in their Effect, were pleasing in themselves to the Heart of afflicted JESUS; because they proceeded from a Fountain of Purity without

without mixture: But what alas had JESUS to do with the Tears of Sinners, which, flowing from a corrupted Source, must rather augment than diminish his Pain. Ah! what then, dear Christian Audience, are we all doing here; if we have not renounced our sinful Attachments? To what purpose do we meet to condole with martyr'd JESUS; if still we hug any lurking Affection to the Sins which made a Martyr of him: When Sin is of so malignant a Nature as to rob even weeping Eyes, of the natural Power and Privilege which JESUS has given them to afford him Comfort? We may even unstring our Eyes with weeping for JESUS: Still will our Tears be but the Tears of Sinners; if we continue in pursuits of Sin and Vanity: And still will such Tears avail just nothing to administer Comfort to our suffering Saviour. Oh dearest Fellow Sympathizers in the Passion of our common Lord! If, as I hope, your Consciences accuse you not of any deadly Sin; weep boiling Tears of Compassion for suffering JESUS: But, if (what I dread) there should be any of you in this Audience so wretched as to be in a State of mortal Guilt; oh! weep with Tears of Blood; yet *weep not over JESUS, but weep over yourselves.*

But turn, oh my Soul, from this sad Thought, and keep-on after JESUS in his

† CAN-
TIC. II. 8,
9.

painful Journey; which, painful as it is, he readily pursues to save you who are so froward to be saved. Languid and faint as were his Limbs to move; how lightly did his Wishes travel-on to the summit of the Mountain! *Like the swift Roe and nimble Fawn of Deer, leaping on the Mountains, leaping over the Hills,* * so hastes the eager Soul of JESUS to the Top of *Calvary*; while his poor shatter'd and half bloodless Frame steps slow but anxious after. How many times he fell and fainted in ascending, I will not undertake to tell you, Christians. But still to see, how little able this Lord of Vigour was of taking a single Step without a Swoon; let it suffice that, Barbarity itself, partly excited to Compassion, partly fearing lest he should not reach the Cross, obliged him to stop by the way, in order to drink. Oh Barbarity indeed! And what is the Drink which is administer'd to half spent thirsty JESUS? Some delicious Cordial which at once may moisten and refresh his parch'd-up Palate and comfort his fainting Spirits. No, no: 'Tis *Wine, mixt with a bitter Dose of Gall and Myrrh*, † to strengthen his Body to greater Sufferings, without relieving his immoderate Thirst. Tyrants! 'Tis to me, to the Christians of this Age that nauseous Draught belongs. We want it most, to harden these pamper'd bodies for Fasts
and

† SMAT.
XXVII. 34.
St. MARK
XV. 23.

and Vigils and Self-macerations, and punish these inordinate Appetites for the false Sweets, in view of which they brought that inoffensive Lamb to such a cruel Pass. However the Draught was bitter: And nothing more was necessary for JESUS (who came to punish our Senses in his own) to take a thorough Taste of it. But then it was of a lulling Nature too: And therefore no wonder JESUS would not drink of it; whose Love, enflamed with ardentest Desires of suffering all for Man's Salvation, could not admit of aught to blunt the keenness of his Sense of Sufferings. Oh Heavens! Shall JESUS beloved Christians, have shewn himself thus eager to suffer all for you; and shall you perversely requite him with the refusal of suffering any thing for him: And still do you pretend to be his Disciples? By these Tokens I protest to you, I know you not for such. And ah! when He himself shall pass to the neighbouring Valley; † if you have no better fairer Proofs to give of your Discipleship; I fear, he too will tell you: *Amen, I say to You, I know ye not.* *

† *Jeboſaphat.*

* S MAT. XXV. 12.



T length, Christians, our Contemplation has led us to the top of *Mount Calvary*; and tired enough, I presume, the Best of you are of the tedious way I have led you. But ah dear guiltless

guiltless Victim of our Crimes! if these thy delicate Disciples are so fatigued with following thee, tho' but in spirit, tho' sitting at their ease; how breathless spent and tired must not Thou have been? Have Patience then, Beloved, yet a little longer: And soon, the bloody execrable Deicide, which put an end to his Fatigues, shall also put an end to yours. The Fathers of the Church consider our Divine Lord at this juncture in the same distressful Plight, as the innocent *Isaac* was, when his Father *Abraham* led him to the like Mountain, bearing on his Shoulders the wood on which he was to be immolated. And there are not wanting very respectable Authors, who say, and that with great Probability, that it was the very same Mountain which was pitch'd upon for the Burning of *Isaac* and the Crucifixion of *JESUS*. However of the Former the Apparatus was all; and God consented not that the Sacrifice should be compleated: Whereas of the Latter the Preparatives were the least part, and were only Dispositions to the last Extremes of Distress. *Isaac* bore the Pile on his Shoulders, without the pain of knowing that he himself was the Victim design'd by his Parent to be consumed by it; and therefore ere he arrived to the destin'd Place, astonish'd to find, as he imagin'd the main Thing forgotten, " Oh my Father, *he cries,*
 " Here

“ Here is a deal of Preparation for sacri-
 “ ficing: The Place is already pitch’d up-
 “ on; the Sacrificer is appointed; and
 “ *behold the Fire and the Wood.* But still
 “ methinks the chief Article is hitherto
 “ wanting: *Where is the Victim of the Ho-*
 “ *locauft?*” * JESUS had no such Ques-
 tion, to ask: He knew from the Beginning
 that He himself was the Victim destin’d
 to be sacrificed upon that Cross, under the
 weight of which he had fainted, and had
 almost as many Falls as he had taken Steps
 to the Summit of this Mountain. Hither
 then (where, as some eminent Writers as-
 sert, the Body of *Adam* was buried) ar-
 rives the Divine JESUS, almost exhausted of
 Breath and Blood and Spirits: Here, me-
 thinks, the Justice of his eternal Father (who
 near four thousand Years had been expecting
 him) appears all terrible to his Encounter,
 holding in hand the Sword of Vengeance,
 stain’d with the blood of all the unhappy
 Reprobates already damn’d, and lifted-up
 against the rest of Sinners: And here (more
 out of reverence to his Father’s Majesty
 than even thro’ the feebleness of wounded
 Nature) the lovely JESUS, beholding his
 awful Parent, falls prostrate to the ground
 and waits his eternal Will. And now, Be-
 loved Brethren, give me leave (for a few
 minutes) to become in some measure a
 Hearer along with yourselves; while an
 ancient

* GENES.
 xxii. 8.

ancient Father of the Church gives us his pious thoughts of this affecting Scene, in the light he mystically view'd it in. This holy Writer, contemplating the present Passage of our Lord's Passion, considers the Eternal Father as chief Actor on this Occasion, and represents him reasoning with his beloved Son somewhat to this Effect: "Come, my dear Son! Thou from the depths of all eternity did'st offer thyself a voluntary Victim for Mankind, to satisfy for their Misdeeds, to appease my Justice and restore my injured Honour. The Time is now expired, which Wisdom had decreed should pass ere the Accomplishment of this thy gracious Contract. The Period now is come for thee to pay the last the total Balance of the exorbitantly heavy Debt for which thou has't so generously engaged thy matchless Love. See'st thou, yon fatal Tree upon the ground? Does not it make thee shrink with horror but to behold it? What say'st thou, my Son? Ar't thou willing to be exalted on it?"

JESUS, methinks, revived at these enlivening Words, gets-up; surveys the Cross; stoops to embrace it; and stretching-out his blessed Limbs upon it, with eyes up-lifted towards admiring Heaven—Yes, Father, he cries, *Thy Judgments are in my sight and thy Justices I have not repell'd from me.* *

The

The time of thy Good Pleasure is come; * * PSALM
that, *as thou has't fitted to me a Body,* † LXXVIII. 14.
I may atone with it, as with a Sin-Offering, † HEB. 9. 5.

for the Sins of Man; appease thy Wrath
against them and recall thy Mercy. Behold
then *my Heart is ready,* OH GOD! *my Heart*
is ready. † — Here stops the Son and here † PSALM
the Father re-assumes. cvii. 1.

“ Well,
“ then, my Son; be crucified: But that
“ is not enough: Thou must not only be
“ fasten'd to the Cross but nail'd to it;
“ that thus thy every Member's pain may
“ pay for every Mortal's Guilt. *Thy*
“ Hands, I know, are in themselves all-
“ spotless. But ah! what has not the Sin-
“ ner done to load them with Iniquities
“ not their own? Thy right Hand how
“ have not the Wicked loaded with Mur-
“ ders, Rapins, Frauds and Impurities?
“ Ah! give it up then to the Hammer
“ and Nail.”

Yes, Father;

The Time of thy Good Pleasure is come. Be-
hold then *my Heart is ready,* my GOD, *my*
Heart is ready; cries the obedient JESUS,
stretching forth his Hand to the Executi-
oners, who, boring it through, fix it with
an enormous Nail to the Cross.

“ But my Son! How shall the Usuries
“ of Misers, the Tricks of Gamesters, the
“ Impositions of Tradesmen, the Forgeries
“ of the Supplanter, the Duels of the Re-
“ vengeful, the Obscenities of leud Men,

E e

“ and

The PASSION of our LORD

“ and the Vanities and laborious Idleneſſes
 “ of vain-glorious Women, be atoned for,
 “ but by thy giving-up thy left Hand alſo
 “ to the Hammer and Nail? ”

Yes, Father: cries the ſtill obedient
 JESUS: Yes. *The Time of thy Good-Plea-
 ſure is come*; and behold *my Heart is ready,*
my GOD; my Heart is ready. Courage then,
 Barbarians: Treat this Hand as you have
 done the other: Pull; hale; and (tho’ at
 the coſt of diſlocating every Joint) force it
 to the place mark’d-out.

“ Still, my Son, thy Feet are no leſs
 “ clogg’d with foreign Guilt than were thy
 “ precious Hands. So many idle Steps
 “ taken in ſearches of Vanity and ſinful
 “ Curioſity: So many ill-timed Journeys
 “ gone in purſuit of Revenge, Ambition,
 “ Luſt, or Avarice: So many dangerous
 “ Paths trodden after Diſſipation; and ſo
 “ many imminent Precipices preſumptu-
 “ ouſly dared, how (alas) ſhall all theſe
 “ be atoned for but by ſubjecting thy Feet
 “ alſo to the like evil Treatment? ”

Yes, Father: *Behold my Heart is ready*
 (cries the unweariedly obedient JESUS:) Be
 it as thou ſay’ſt. Let the Ruſſians take my
 feet; let ’em bore them; let ’em nail them
 to the Croſs, or ſingly, or jointly one over
 the other, as their Barbarity ſhall judge the
 moſt tormenting. Let Man but be re-
 deem’d; I care not what I ſuffer. Oh the
 Stretchings!

Stretchings! the Piercings! the Wounds!
 Oh the Anguish they put him to! Oh the
 founding Strokes! Oh the cruel Hammer-
 ings, every single Blow of which, shaking
 the Cross of JESUS, must shock his tender
 tortured Frame and revive the Dolour of
 each fester'd Sore. Methinks in the abun-
 dance of his Anguish, he complains by the
 mouth of his Psalmist. * Father! *They*
have dug my Hands and my Feet. No more
 hands have they left me free to heal the
 Leper, to touch the Blind, to cure the
 Sick: No more feet have they left me at
 liberty to visit the Poor and Helpless, to
 go in search of Sinners and carry thy Doc-
 trins Name and Will from Province to Pro-
 vince. In short they have robb'd me of Health
 Strength Fame and Liberty and all. Ah
 say then: Is not thy Justice satisfied as yet?
 Or have I even more to undergo?

* PSALM
 xxi. 17.

“ Yes, yes; my Son: Thou has't still
 “ the Sins of Man's external Senses to atone
 “ for. Thou has't Vinegar and Gall to
 “ drink to satisfy for numberless idle Words,
 “ prophane Jests, Lies, Perjuries, Oaths,
 “ Obscenities, Imprecations, broken Vows
 “ and Blasphemies of Worldlings; besides
 “ the wanton luxurious gluttonous Gratifi-
 “ cations of their pamper'd Palates. Thou
 “ has't yet to satisfy for so many Repinings
 “ at Providence, Detractions, Calumnies, and
 “ reviling Scandals utter'd against a Neigh-

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"bour; as well as the untold idle, vicious,
 "backbiting and immodest Conversations
 "wilfully listen'd to by thoughtless Mortals.
 "To atone therefore for all this, strait let
 "thy blessed Body, thus fasten'd as it is to
 "that opprobrious Cross, be lifted in the
 "air." — Ah Christians! It was then
 that astonish'd Nature saw it's sovereign
 Author hoisted on a tree amidst the Huzzas
 and Shouts and Mockeries of a brutal Sol-
 diery: It was then that adoring Angels
 with horror saw the Source of all their
 Glory hanging between skies and earth on
 a painful shameful Gibbet derided, scorn'd
 and made the Butt of Blasphemies and
 Taunts of an insulting harden'd Populace,
 It was then, my God, that thou beheld'st
 thy guiltless coequal, coeternal Son, be-
 come the Victim of our Crimes,

But ah! *methinks the languid King of*
Martyrs cries: Ah eternal Father! Are not
 the Sins of Man by this sufficiently atoned
 for?

"No, my Son;
 "*replies the Divine Father.* Great is the
 "Guilt which Sinners by their internal
 "Senses have contracted: And therefore
 "great is the Torture which remains for
 "thy internal Senses to endure in expia-
 "tion of it. Thus then in this oppro-
 "brious Posture, thou art to behold, to
 "the fresh torment of thy bashful Mo-
 "desty, thy blessed Body half-nakedly ex-
 "posed

" posed to public view: Thou ar't to see
 " two Thieves made Partners in thy dis-
 " grace; an impious Tribe of Executioners
 " dividing thy Garments among them, and
 " that seamless Coat thy blessed Mother
 " made thee, polluted in the hands of a
 " Ruffian who gains it by the cast of a
 " Dye; Thou ar't to behold the Sneers,
 " the Grins, the Shakes of head and
 " Shrugs of Shoulders and taunting Looks
 " of an insulting Multitude: Thou ar't
 " to see the outrageous Spear which is to
 " insult thy precious Side after Death: And
 " ah thou ar't to see the more sharp-pointed
 " Spear which pierces the Soul of thy Virgin
 " Parent, standing with thy loved Disciple
 " beneath the Cross. And all this to ex-
 " piate the many dissolute Looks, immo-
 " dest Glances unchaste Oglings as well as
 " the numberless Number of flaunting pro-
 " phane vain-glorious and indecent appear-
 " ances abroad, which Mortals have been
 " and still will be guilty of, in spite of all
 " thy Humiliation. Finally in this piteous
 " plight thou ar't to remain for the Space
 " of three whole Hours agonizing in the
 " utmost excess of pain," Ah
 " Father! what time thou pleassest best to ap-
 " point. So Mankind be rescued from eternal
 " Death; I am disposed to suffer all. Yes,
 " Father: *The time of thy Good-Pleasure is*
 " *come; My Heart is ready.*

Now

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Now who would not think, Beloved Christians, that this divine Sufferer had by this time fully satisfied for our Sins. Whereas the worst was still to come. Thus far he had only been forsaken by Mankind: But now he must undergo the very Abandon of God, giving him up to the bitterest Excesses of Torture. But—to what greater Extremes of Torture can the Divine Rigour abandon him, than He has already suffer'd? Whereabouts shall the Almighty Vengeance strike him to open a fresh Wound? On his Head? But that is already all over pierced with Thorns. On his Face then? That is already cover'd with Cuts and Bruises. On his Shoulders Back or Bosom? Alas his Flagellation has left there no vacant Space to lodge another Wound. Shall he then wound him through the Eyes, the Ears, the Tongue? Ah every Sense has already had it's proper Torments. Not even his unstraying Feet escaped without their equal Portion of exquisit Distress: And oh my Love, *what are those Wounds in the midst of thy hands,* * which with such outrage keep thee nail'd and suspended upon a shameful Gibbet? “ Ah Sinners (says JESUS *methinks*) ask not the Cause. The Cause is my own Love and your Ingratitude. Seek not my Excutioners elsewhere than among yourselves. For your Crimes I suffer. For
“ the

• ZACH.
xiii. 6.

"the redemption of you am I crucified." Poor JESUS! How dearly has not he paid for our Crimes! And yet (oh Heavens!) how cheaply do not we daily repeat them? How severely has not he suffer'd for our Sins! And yet Heaven only knows, whether or not we yet feel any true Sense of Sorrow for them. Oh my Beloved Saviour! Oh sovereign gracious Author of our life! Are we then the Authors of thy death? Were these vile Hands of ours the guilty Ones which nail'd thee to thy painful Cross? These which open'd all those horrid Wounds? And still are we unmoved? Oh Rocks! split ye asunder to reproach our shameful hardness of Heart. Oh Sinners! Sinners. Yes: You are the Tyrants, who have persecuted JESUS with the mortal Arrows of your Sins. You are the Persecutors, who have forced JESUS to flee for refuge into the arms of a painful opprobrious Cross. But alas! the Deed is done: And now the only Remedy is a sincere Repentance. Ah! repent then for what is past: Repent and merit pardon. Oh thrice dear Brethren! It was the ardent Love, which JESUS had for you, that brought him to the Pass in which you now consider him. Let it suffice then that the Jews have treated him with so much cruel Outrage: Why should you, Oh Catholics, who are his own, repeat that Outrage by repeating

repeating the Sins for which he endured it? No: have pity on this bleeding Innocent, who loved you more than life; who loved you even to dying for you. Ready is he to pardon your past Ignorance, your past Folly, your past Frailty: Nay more he is ready to forgive the very Malice with which you have hitherto offended him. Forbear then at least to offend him now, expiring on the Cross: Forbear to crucify him over-again with fresh Offences.

Already are we, methinks, at the last Gasps of this expiring Lamb: Already do his last remains of Strength begin to fail him: Already his vital Spirits retreat; and from the livid Wounds the precious Blood distills but by lessening Drops. His venerable Head leans drooping on his sacred Shoulders to bid Mankind a last Farewell, and leave them an example of profound Humility in this last Extreme of his perfect Obedience to his Eternal Father. Oh Heavens! JESUS CHRIST, the eternal Word of GOD, the only begotten Son of the Divine Father, perfect GOD himself as well as perfect Man, the Desire of the eternal Hills, the Expectation of the Patriarchs, the Impatience of the Prophets, the Good-tidings of the Apostles, the Laurel of Martyrs, the Crown of Virgins, the Hope of Ages, the End of all Time — after amorously complaining of his Eternal
Father's

Father's having abandon'd him, with a The Seven dying Sentences of our Lord upon the Cross.
 *My GOD! My GOD! why has't thou forsaken me;* * ——— after yielding-up with the most perfect Conformity his blessed Soul to his Divine Parent's disposal with a *Father! into thy hands I commend my Spirit;* † ——— after praying to him for his very Murderers and pleading their excuse, with a *Father! forgive them; for they know not what they do;* † ——— after recommending St. *John* to his blessed Mother for a Son in his absence and recommending his Virgin-Parent for a Mother to the beloved Disciple, with a *Woman, behold thy Son, Man, behold thy Mother;* || ——— after promising Paradise to the penitent Thief, with a *This day thou shalt be with me in Paradise;* § ——— after having left his precious Body and Blood for food to us and farther leaving the HOLY GHOST to his Church, Persecution to his Apostles and Ministers, his Cross to repenting Sinners, and Hell to the Reprobate; ——— after declaring (with an *I thirst.* *) his ardent Desire of fulfilling the Divine Decrees and Man's Redemption; ——— after protesting (with an *It is consummate.* †) that all things were fulfill'd, ——— fulfill'd the Anxiety of the Patriarchs, fulfill'd the Predictions of the Prophets, fulfill'd the Rigours of God's Justice; fulfill'd

St. MAT.
xxvii. 46.†
St. LUKE
xxiii. 46.†
Ibid. ver.
34.||
St. JOHN
xix. 26,
27.§
St. LUKE
xxiii. 43.•
St. JOHN
xix. 28.†
Ibid. ver.
30.

fill'd the ultimate excess of his own Divine Mercy, and fulfill'd the last extremes of human Cruelty and Ingratitude; — after three and thirty years of innocent edifying Life: — After all this, *I say*, JESUS CHRIST [in the Flower of his Age, — at Noon-day, — in view of the World, — with the horror of the Angels, with the Eclipse of the Sun, with the revolution of the Elements, with the rending of the Temple, with the splitting of Rocks, with the yawning of Graves, with the starting-up of the Dead, and the universal Convulsion of trembling Nature] *crying-out with-*
out a loud Voice yielded-up † Ah Savages! — Say You the rest: For I have not the heart to utter more.

St. MAT.
xxvii. 50.



AND yet, what an exuberance of compassionate Tenderness obliges me to stifle the solemn Sadness of the Church, her melancholy Notes, her low-tuned Psalmody, her silenced Bells and Organs, her Altars stript, her cover'd Images and Nakedness of Ornaments, all loudly speak, to Such as have but ears to hear and Senses to perceive. Nay the very lifeless Corse of my Redeemer should speak it to you; if (following the pious Custom of other sacred Preachers) I could but resolve to shew you the naked Semblance of his
 mangled

mangled Majesty. But why should I expose the Likeness of my injured Lord to public View in an Age, in an Audience, in which there may be danger of exposing him to fresh Affronts? Why, Christians, should I recall one by one those sacred Wounds to sight, the Memory of which may probably but serve to aggravate your guilty Unconcern? To what purpose shall I uncover a Crucifix to You, who have no tears perhaps to bewail the Death of him whom it represents? Ah! could I take down from the Cross this Christ, and fasten on it in his stead some Friend of yours who had suffer'd for you but one hundredth part of what your JESUS underwent; the Sight would move you to compassion. Had I but occasion to preach to you the Passion of some faithful Slave of yours, who died in your defence; perhaps you would shed some tears upon his Bier. At least you would not insult him in his Coffin: At least you would not trample on his lifeless Body. And is it possible, that You, Christians, who would certainly be moved to pity a mere Man, a temporal Friend, nay a Bond-Slave in this Condition, can still be void of every Sense of Tenderness for JESUS? Oh my slighted Lord! How don't I deplore thy lavish'd Blood? How don't I lament thy unpitied Death? Had'st thou died for Devils; Devils would not have treated thee with more In-

gratitude than Christians do.——Quickly then reach me hither a Crucifix, to try a last Essay with the unrelenting Sinner.

Divine Redeemer! Oh might I, by thee commision'd, descend to the Gates of Hell; and there (holding in one hand thy Resemblance in a Crucifix and with the other reaching-out to the Penitent authentic Professors of thy Pardon) say to those hapless Beings —— “Behold, rebellious Spirits, your Saviour hanging breathless on “a Cross for love of you;” —— how instantly should not I convert the very Devils! How soon would all the Abyss of Hell be changed into a Paradise, and all the Damn'd to Saints! And what? Because thou has't died for Men, still in possession of means and freedom to repent; must thy Love be scorn'd, thy Death be trampled-on, and all thy Passion be unfruitful? Must all the Fruit I reap to-day from preaching thee thus crucified, be to render my Audience more criminal? And shall I then resign to Sinners the Crucifix I preach, only that harden'd Christians may tread it under foot with their Obduracy? —— No, no: Keep back the Cross to spare irreverences. They who can mentally contemplate JESUS already trodden-on, torne and crucified, without a pitying tear: How shall they ever be moved with the more faint Resemblance of him in a Crucifix?

Ah

Ah Christians! There are Tears to be found for the loss of a Darling, for the breaking-off of a favourit Friendship, for an Affront received, for an Enemy advanced, for a Damage felt or a Disappointment apprehended: But for JESUS no Tears can be found. *Ob Heavens! be astonish'd at this;* * JEREM.
And you, ob Gates of Heaven, be exceedingly desolate. ii. 12. * Now o'days to weep at the remembrance of JESUS's Death is esteem'd a feminin Weakness, an imbecillity of splenetic Devotion: And where a human Bosom, soften'd by any forcible impulse of Grace, is on the point of melting into tears, it must be check'd for reputation's sake, to avoid the imputation of being forsooth a Cant, Oh Age! Oh Manners! In what a harden'd Age of Profligacy do we live? Tygers! Savages! Monsters then! Nay Stocks and Stones! melt ye into Compassion at the accurst Catastrophe, the sacrilegious Deicide, which cannot draw from Christian Eyes one single tear. But whither does my Grief transport me? 'Tis true, we are all of us Sinners, miserable Sinners: But after all we are not Devils: And yet how much worse than Devils must not we be; could we forbear to pity with the utmost excess of tenderness that generous Parent who has loved us even to the utmost excess of Torture? Let Enmity, Barbarity and Hatred be ever so inveterate implacable and stript of Humanity; I remember but
 one

one Instance (which I shall by-and-by relate) of it's ever reaching to insult the Wretched in the Extremes of Affliction or Depression. There is a certain Dignity in eminent Distress which commands a compassionate Respect even from the Authors of it. And one solitary Happiness which attends on such Sufferers is, that their Misery itself is generally merit enough with their very Enemies to turn their Persecution into Pity.

Joseph, while distinguish'd with Caresses by his Father *Jacob*, and, in his parti-colour'd Coat, adorn'd with the Pledges of his Parents tenderest Affections, was a constant Mark of his Brethren's Envy, Malice, Hatred and Persecution. Oh what Rancour Vengeance and Cruelty swell'd their empoison'd Bosoms; banish'd thence every sentiment of Blood, and stifled every voice of Nature! Nothing less in short would appease their Fury against him than the devoting him to Death. *Behold the Dreamer*, they cry: *Come, let us kill him.* * But no sooner do they see him stript of his gay Ornaments, deprived of the Protection of their Father, and buried alive in the Cistern: No sooner does he appear with fallen Countenance, weeping Eyes, sobbing Bosom and afflicted Heart than all their Fury turns to Fondness and all their Rage to Pity. Ah? *what will it avail us*, they cry; *if we kill our Brother and conceal his Blood? It is better ... that our*
Hands

• GENES.
xxxvii.
19, 20.

Hands be not polluted. For after all He is * GENES.
our Brother and our flesh. * XXXVII.

26, 27.

Now the Case is somewhat more piteous with regard to JESUS. We not only stripp'd him of his Garment, but even of his Skin: We not only spirited him away from his Parent to sell him to Strangers; but provoked his eternal Father to deliver him up to be slaughter'd by his own: We in a word not only fought his Death, but really effected it. Yes; JESUS really suffer'd Death both for and by our Sins. We have had his Blood: What more can our insatiable Cruelty covet at his hands? If we used him so basely while living; is it not time at least to pity him, when dead? *For after all He is our Brother and our Flesh.* Oh my Redeemer! if there ever was a Man so basely treated as thou has't been; I will not gainsay the Cruelty of those Christians who are disposed to insult thee even after Death with fresh Offences. But! if thou was't that Man of Sorrows, who scarce did'st retain the Figure of a Man; if thou was't made *the Reproach of Men and the Outcast* of the People; if thou did'st, to fulfill thy Prophet's Words, become that *Worm* rather than Man on whom the Eternal Father pour'd-forth all his Vengeance; on whom the Cruelty of the Gentils, the Perfidy of the Jews, and even the Ingratitude of Christianity, heap'd Scourges and Thorns and Nails and Cross and Shame and Death; ah!

The PASSION of our LORD

ah ! tell me : How shall we ever henceforth presume to offend thee wilfully again ? How shall we forbear to feel Compassion for thee ? Why shal't thou remain the only injured Being still unpitied ?

Come then, Christians : Let us turn our Eyes and Hearts to the foot of you Altar. Look on that naked Crucifix extended on the ground ; the faint, the feeble Likeness of our mangled Lord. Despicable as that Figure may appear ; more despicable still was the appearance of martyr'd JESUS, whom it represents. Just in that posture was he seen upon Mount *Calvary* : So closed-up were his Lips ; so shut his Eyes ; so nail'd his Hands and Feet ; so crown'd so drooping hung his Head ; and so half-naked was exposed his chaste but flea'd bismear'd and bloody Body. Just so (as near as the shadow can approach the Substance) our Holy Mother his mourning Spouse the Church presents him in that Image to our Sight ; that in that Image we may adore him and pay our grateful Homage to him ; and that, in the relative Respect we shew to this his feeble Likeness, we may express our detestation and abhorrence of the bloody Sacrilege which thus disfigured him. Take notice then, Christians that He, who while living on his Cross, recommended his Soul to his Eternal Father, now, in his dead Image upon the Cross, turns to You his Children,

to recommend his Body to your Care and Re-
 verence. Now, methinks, to Every-One of
 you I hear him say : “ *Into your Hands I*
 “ *commend* henceforth my Body and my Blood,
 “ Christians ! See how you treat them : See
 “ that you treat them well. What ? tho’ by
 “ other hands I have been illy treated ;
 “ by yours let me not be so. Or if even
 “ You among the rest have used me basely
 “ hitherto ; forbear to treat me so again.
 “ Nay even *into your hands* (Oh Profli-
 “ gates !) *I commend* my Blood : Even into
 “ your Parricidic Hands. If what I have
 “ already suffer’d content you not ; even
 “ renew all my Passion over-again with
 “ the renewal of your Crimes. If that be
 “ not enough ; trample me under foot
 “ with your Obduracy of Heart. Ah !
 “ harsh as all this may sound to the tender
 “ Christian’s Ear : All this is nothing more
 “ than what Thou in particular art doing,
 “ Oh harden’d Sinner, who, lurking among
 “ these contrite Children of mine ; art still
 “ (in spite of all the inward Checks and Calls
 “ and Graces, thou has’t received during this
 “ Rehearfal of my Passion) saying within
 “ thyself :—I will not quit this Woman,
 “ that unjust Traffic, this other evil Prac-
 “ tise :—But oh thoughtless Mortal ! be
 “ not thus harden’d in thy own Perdition.
 “ Why treat me thus ? Why be cruel to
 “ thyself in being so to me ? *Oh my People,*
 “ *what*

- * MICH. vi. 3. " *what have I done to you? or in what have I vex'd you? answer me.* * I had a Body; and for you I gave it up to Death: I had a plenty of Blood; and for you I shed it all: I had a Heart; and that I destin'd to be yours; and yours it still may be, if you will but make it so.
- † ISAIAH v. 4. " *What then could I do to my Vineyard and I have not done it?* † Ah! can't thou devise Aught more which remains for me to do towards saving thee? Suggest it, if thou can'st; and it shall be done."

Christians! How shall we correspond to the prodigious Love of JESUS but with silently adoring him and secretly humbling our contrite hearts. This Instant then let us away to the foot of his Cross, to kiss with our Lips and bathe with our tears that Memorial of his Mercy. There, while, with our external homage and relative worship of his Image, we manifest our profoundest adoration of his Person and Memory, and thus publicly declare our Detestation of the Jewish Barbarity; let us inwardly kiss his sacred Wounds with our Minds and Hearts: Let us tell him with our Souls, that were we in the place of that ungrateful Nation; or were he conversant with us (as once with them) instead of deriding, we would homage him; instead of wounding, we would adore him; instead

stead of crucifying, we would wish to die for him: But as it is, that still we condole with him; are sorry for him; and pity him for what he has suffer'd the same, as if he suffer'd still. Yes, Dearest JESUS: Behold us all united here at the foot of this thy Cross, disposed with reverent Hearts to adore thee; disposed with melting Souls to pity thee. But *pity* did I say? Nay more we are resolved to love thee; to love thee above all things, to love thee for thy blessed sake alone, and love thee more than life. It grieves us to our Souls that ever we were so base as to offend thee: Not merely because we have deserved to lose thee, but more because we ought incessantly to have loved thee. Forgive almighty Love, forgive; and have not our past Sins in remembrance, which we are resolved rather to die then ever repeat again. Nay more we are determin'd once for all to do what ever thou shal't require in proof of our loving Thee. Is it thy Pleasure, sweet JESUS, that we *learn of thee to be meek and humble of heart?* * We will, dear Lord; we will. It is thy Pleasure that we renounce the Things of the Earth to place *our Treasures and Hearts in Heaven?* † We will do so, my GOD. Is it thy will that, copying from thy *Eternal Father*, we do Justice, love Mercy, and join it with

* S MAT.
xi. 29.

† Ibid.
vi. 19.

* *Ibid.*

ix. 13.

S. LUKE

vi. 36.

† S. MAT.

x. 16.

† S. JOHN

xv. 17.

|| S. MARK

xiii. 33.

§ S. MAT.

v. 48.

our Sacrifices? * We will do thus, dear Lord, in obedience to thee. Is it thy will that we be *wise as Serpents* in the improvement of every Christian Virtue, and *simple still as guiltless Doves* in the ignorance of every sinful Practice? † It shall be henceforth our Endeavour to be such. Wil't thou that we copy after thee in the Exercise of mutual Charity towards one another. † Wil't thou that we be *watchful* over ourselves and fervent in *praying* to thee. || My Saviour, from this time forward, thou shal't be punctually obey'd. Wil't thou, in a word, that we study to become *perfect* § *as also our heavenly Father is perfect*? Be it so: By the assistance of thy Grace we will be perfect, we will be Saints. Shall it be said that we indulge our Vices, after seeing our God and Saviour die for them? Forbid it gracious JESUS! And oh forbid that any here be damn'd by relapsing into Sin! No: We have all pitied thee as suffering: And we are all resolved so to live for the time to come as that we may one day enjoy thee glorified. But in the mean time, Dear JESUS, dismiss not me nor any of this Audience to our homes without thy Benediction. Unnail thy Right-arm, and loosen'd from the Cross, stretch it forth upon us, to sprinkle us with thy precious Blood and efficacious Grace, by blessing us with thy own paternal hand.

Look

Look ye, Beloved Brethren, JESUS is perfectly disposed to act the tender Parent towards you all; if you will but act the part of Children, and give-up yourselves to him, intirely, sincerely, and for good. And can there be a Wretch so harden'd as on this solemn day of Love not to give-up himself intirely to JESUS? Yes: strangely some-how my Heart misgives me, that there may yet be lurking, in the mid'st of us, some Reprobate still bent upon resisting all the Love of JESUS. Yes: Methinks, I hear him say: "No matter: I am still
" resolved not to abandon Sin, nor quit
" my vicious Habits, in spite of all." —
That is: "No matter for all these Stripes
" and Thorns and Blood-shed, which JESUS
" submitted to for me. In spite of all, I
" do not love him. In spite of all, I am
" resolved to sin again, tho' it offend
" him." — Alas! what shall I say to such a Wretch (if such a Wretch there be) more than what the Apostle has already said; If any Man love not our Lord JESUS CHRIST; *let him be Anathema*, let him be *accursed*. * — Accursed indeed and thrice accursed! Since the last heaviest and worst of Curses which can befall a Man is, that he love not JESUS.

That Monster of her Sex and of human Nature the inhuman *Tullia*, aspiring to her royal Father's throne, deem'd it impossible

to

* 1 COR.
xvi. 22.

to relish the most common Enjoyments of Life, till, by embruing her hands in his blood, she might have it in her power to satiate her ambition. Wherefore to satisfy her criminal Pride and Impatience and reign some Months the sooner, by transferring the Crown of *Rome* immediately from the Head of her ancient Parent to that, of her Husband *Tarquin*; in conjunction with him, she contrives to have the reverend Sovereign massacred. Yet, had she stopt here; her unnatural Barbarity had not remain'd, without Example. But — returning from the Capitol, whither she had been to congratulate with her Husband, upon his butcherly Access to the Diadem of the murder'd Monarch; so Cruelty disposing, her Chariot was stopt in it's Career by the dead Body of the royal assassinated *Servius*, which, still warm, lay weltring in his blood in the mid'st of the Street: None presuming to approach it for awe, save his impious Daughter; who, without the least emotion of respect or concern for her injured Parent, would not so much as suffer her Coachman to turn his Horses aside, but commanded him to drive over it. Nevertheless the very Beasts who drew the gaudy Parricide along, struck with horror, attempted to recoil; and the Driver, shrinking with reverential awe at the melancholy Spectacle, stopp'd to give leisure for some kindly

kindly Return of Pity in the Monster's Breast, in hopes of a Counter-Order. But the Tygres *Tullia*, as much a stranger to Pity as to Remorse, with a peremptory unrelenting Air, again commands him boldly to drive over the Body of her slaughter'd Father: "For, *say'd she*, the shortest way to Government is the best." — Oh miserable Reprobate, whoever thou may'st be, lurking amid'st this Croud of weeping Christians, unconcern'd and unconverted! Is it not enough that, like the bowel-less *Tullia*, thou has't laid thy God and Father weltering in his Blood; unless thou insult his Death by stifling every emotion of returning Pity; every Sense of awakening Remorse; every Voice of converting Grace? Courage then: Thou has't but one step farther to proceed, in order to come-up with her. If thou ar't absolutely bent, like her, on not repenting; like her be boldly wicked: Drive resolutely over the Cross of assassinated JESUS, by thy Contempt, and quit this Audience: That thou may'st not, with thy Presence, suspend the sweet Effects of his tender Mercy from lighting on this Congregation of Innocents and Penitents. Away, away with the holy Cross from before that Altar: Or rather away with that excommunicable Reprobate from before it; who, like another *Judas*, is preparing to kiss it, only to betray
with

with fresh Offences the Lord it represents; Open those Doors and banish the Traitor from among you. But! the business is to pick him out: And JESUS, whose long-suffering Patience permits the Tares to grow-up with the Corn, will not discover those, till this be ripe and ready for the eternal Harvest. Unhappy Wretch then; whoever thou art, repent this instant, I conjure thee; or leave this Place: And let there be for thee no more Sacraments nor Sacrifice; no nor a Crucifix in Death for thee to cast thy eyes upon, who during Life can't treat it with such foul irreverence.

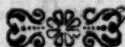
But what am I saying, Christians? To whom can this Anathema be applicable? To No-one, I hope: At least, I hope, to No-one in this Sanctuary. This Day is a Day of Love, a Day of Benedictions, and not of *Anathemas*. Let No-one be kept at a distance from the Cross of Christ upon this day, on which his Love was pleased to plant it as his Standard to gather all to him. And surely None of You, my dear-loved Hearers, can be so strangely wedded to Perdition as to chuse rather to trample on the Death of JESUS and be banish'd from his Altar, than to return to him? Surely the bare thought of deserving such a Censure must shock your very Souls, and be enough to inspire you to put a final stop to sinning? What Christian then can be so harden'd,

so perverse, so devil-like, as, on a Day made sacred by the Death of JESUS, not to devote himself intirely to this great Lord of Love? Surely, my crucified Redeemer, it is impossible? Surely thy unexhausted Mercy will forbid it? Behold us here, at least, all prostrate with our Souls before thee; desirous at the foot of thy Cross to end our Lives this instant, or to begin them over again and live henceforth to thee alone. Lo! I the unworthiest of thy Ministers, in my own name and in the name of all my contrite Hearers, with utmost bitterness of Soul, implore thy Pardon for myself and them and every contrite Christian. Pardon, dear Lord, of that venerable Head, our Crimes so cruelly have crown'd with Thorns: Pardon of those blessed Feet and Hands our Feet so barbarously bored with nails: Pardon of that sacred side our Vices pierced: Pardon of that heavenly Heart which our Perfidy so grievously oppress'd with Tears and Grieffs and Smart: Pardon of all those guiltless Members which our Enormities tormented to excess: Pardon of all those deadly Stripes and Wounds and Sores with which our Guilt once cover'd thee from head to foot! Pardon! Pardon! Pardon for what is past! And for the time to come no more will we offend thee with fresh Sins. No, GOD of my heart: No more Sins for us; no more, no more. This

is our last, our firm, unalterable Purpose:
And by the Aid of thy all-powerful Grace
in this fixt Resolution will we live and
die.

* S JOHN
v. 14.

Come then, Christians, be faithful; and
see that you make good my Words. You
who have not resolved, resolve this instant:
You who have resolved, be steady to your
Promise. Do you but mind the future:
And JESUS shall pardon what is past. *Go
then and sin no more, lest something worse
befall you.* * Thus ere you go, let me, with
my Soul upon my Lips, conjure you never
to offend again your loving lovely JESUS,
who, that he may not be constrain'd to
exert himself one day your angry Judge,
has this day proved himself your gracious
Saviour and bled to death for love of you.
Yes: I his unworthy Minister, once more
conjuring you never to offend again this
Lord of Love, do, in his Name and by
the Priestly Powers I hold from him, give
to you all his Blessing: From this Instant
then *may the Almighty God of Hosts, FA-
THER SON and HOLY GHOST bless and pre-
serve you,* and make you all his own to all
Eternity. AMEN.





A FAREWELL
S E R M O N

Preach'd at the H——, in 1741.

A C T S xx. 18, 20, 22, 26.

You know from the first day that I enter'd in among you, in what manner I have been with you all the time,..... How I have withdrawn nothing which was profitable, but that I preach it to you, and taught you openly and from house to house,..... And now behold, being bound by the Spirit, I go to Jerusalem..... Wherefore I take you to witness this present day that I am clear from the blood of All. For I have not spared to declare to you All the counsel of GOD.



WHEN St. PAUL was about to resign the Care of his beloved Flock at *Ephesus*; he gather'd them together to take leave of them. And the Oeconomy of his Farewell

Sermon was comprised under these few Heads. In the *first* place to leave such an Impression on their minds of the Doctrin he had taught them, as might give a perpetual Sanction to it; he declares it to have been the Counsel, and none but the Counsel of GOD; and to add a farther Weight to it, he reminds them, that his was all the Labour, theirs all the Profit, arising from that Doctrin. *I have withdrawn nothing,* says he, *which was profitable; but that I preach'd it to you, and taught you openly and from house to house, * not making my life more precious than myself, nor sparing to declare to you all the Counsels of GOD.†*

* ACTS
XX. 20.

† Ver. 27.

Secondly, He signifies to them that for the future it will be their Interest to practice in his Absence, what his Duty obliged him to admonish them of, while he continued among them: And this he does in the most affecting manner. *Bound by the Spirit, I go to Jerusalem,* says the Apostle. ‡ *And now behold I know that You shall no more see my face, All you, through whom I have past preaching the Kingdom of GOD. Wherefore I take you to witness, this present day, that I AM CLEAR FROM THE BLOOD OF ALL. ||* And in these words he seems to have had in view that important Passage in *Ezekiel*, § where God tells his Minister: *If, when I say to the Wicked, DYING THOU SHALT DIE, thou tell him not,*

‡ Ver. 22.

|| Ver. 25,
26.

§ Chap.
III. 18.

not, nor speak, that he may be converted from his wicked way, and live; the same wicked Man SHALL DIE in his Iniquity, but HIS BLOOD WILL I REQUIRE AT THY HAND.

Whereas, on the other side, if thou denounce to the Wicked, and he be not converted from his Impiety; He indeed SHALL DIE in his Iniquity, but THOU HAS'T DE-

*LIVER'D THY OWN SOUL. * This latter* * *Ibid.* 19;

was happily the Case with St. Paul: He was conscious of having faithfully discharged the Duty of his Ministry; and therefore might boldly say to his Flock what he did say: " I appeal to yourselves, " Beloved Children, whether I did not, " while I had the Care of you, faithfully " acquit myself of my Duty towards you; " whether I have not preach'd to you the " Word of God in all it's Purity, without disguising or stifling the Counsels " which Heaven design'd you by my " mouth, or feigning any of my own; and " whether I have not, on all occasions, " exhorted the Good to persevere and " warn'd the Wicked to desist in time " from their Ways, and repent. It is not " then for myself I am now concern'd, " No, thanks to the Divine Grace: I have " deliver'd my own Soul. I am clean from " the blood of you All. You therefore are " now all my Concern: For You is all " my Sollicitude; that You be as anxious " to

“ to deliver your Souls, as I have been to
 “ deliver mine; that you profit by my
 “ Labours; and keep Each of you clean
 “ from your own Blood, by neither for-
 “ getting nor neglecting the Advices I have
 “ given you. For, tho’, while I had the
 “ Care of you, I was jointly interested
 “ with yourselves in making you Good,
 “ or keeping you so; now, that I resign,
 “ the Charge of you, I declare against
 “ having any hand in your Damnation: I
 “ wash my hands of your Blood, and throw
 “ wholly on yourselves the weighty Affair
 “ of your Salvation.” Thus much seems
 comprised in those mysterious Words which
 make-up the *Second Head* of our Apostle’s
 Discourse, *I am clean from the blood of All*.

In the *third Place* to put them still more
 upon their guard against rendering his past
 Labours fruitless, nay pernicious, by their
 Neglect; he charges them, not to lose the
 Grace nor slight the Inspirations, which
 they had received from God by means of
 his Apostleship; an Apostleship which had
 cost himself so much pains and anxiety.
 And farther that they may not slight the
 important Caution, by thinking it unneces-
 sary; he warns them, that their Faith and
 Virtue, after his Departure, will be vio-
 lently attack’d on all sides from without and
 even from within; and therefore that it
 must be of the greatest Consequence for
 them,

them, in his Absence, to become Watchmen to themselves, to keep a sharp Look-out against external Enemies, and to keep an unwearied Watch over themselves: I know, says he, *that, after my Departure, there will ravening Wolves enter-in among you, not sparing the Flock. For which cause be vigilant, keeping in Memory that for three years, night and day, I ceased not with tears to admonish every one of you.* *

* ACTS
xx. 29,
31.

Fourthly, That his Removal from them might leave no ill Impression on the minds of his Hearers, to the Prejudice of his Doctrins; he solemnly declares that the Spirit of Avarice had no more Share in his quitting them than it at first had any part in his coming among them: For that nothing but his spiritual Obligations made him resign-up the immediate Care of them. *Bound by the Spirit, says he, I go to Jerusalem.* As if he had said,—" 'Tis not my Dear
" Children, any lucrative View which
" takes me from you, but the Duty of
" following whither my Spiritual Obligations summon me. 'Tis not the Love
" of commodious Translations, nor the
" Desire of better worldly Accomodations
" than I have among you, which induces
" me now to throw-up my Charge. If
" sordid Interest had any Influence over
" me; why did it not bias me all the time
" I have been among you? Whereas that
" it

* *Ibid.*
ver. 33,
34.

" it never did, I appeal to yourselves: Be
" you my Judges, that I have not acted the
" Part of a Mercenary with any of you.
" *No Man's Silver and Gold or Garment*
" *have I coveted. Yourselfs know that for*
" *such things as were needful for me.....*
" *these hands have minister'd. **

† *Ibid.*
ver. 32,
36.

Finally, the Apostle, to crown all his Apostolic Labours, recommends his beloved Flock to God, as he had often done before: By doing which he lays them under the strictest Tyes of Gratitude to do the like for him. *And now I recommend you to God, says he, and to the Word of his Grace..... And falling on his Knees he pray'd with them All. †*

Such, Beloved Christians, such in Substance was the *Farewell Sermon* which the great St. PAUL made to his *Ephesian* Disciples, before his Departure from among them; after having been their immediate Pastor and resided amid'st them preaching and teaching for the Space of three Years.

It is not quite so long, Dearest Auditors, that I have fulfill'd the Apostleship to You. However: As, from the first day of my coming to you, even to this present time, I have earnestly wish'd to copy after this great Apostle's Zeal, by instructing you fully in your Christian Duty and exhorting you to it with unwearied Assiduity; so, being now about to resign the immediate
Charge

Charge of You, I cannot wish to copy after a better Master, even in taking my leave of You.

You know then, Beloved, and to yourselves I appeal for the truth of what I say: I have used my utmost Efforts to instruct you in your Duty; and have omitted no practicable means to persuade and win you over to the Practice of it: *Night and day not ceasing, with tears*, to pray for and *admonish every one of you*. I have been constantly at the Beckon of such of you as wanted me; to visit you, in Sickness; to comfort you, in Affliction; to guard you, in Innocence; or call you to Repentance. I have unfolded to you whatever I found useful towards the Knowledge of God, the Love of him, and the Beatitude of an eternal Union with him; and have not wilfully neglected any Opportunity, or omitted any Circumstance, which might possibly be of advantage to you. In short, if it be lawful for a wretched Sinner to adopt the Words of a glorious Saint; I may with truth say, after the great Apostle of the Gentils: *I have withdrawn nothing which was profitable; but that I preach'd it to you, and taught you openly and from house to house*. I have neither sooth'd you in Vice nor flatter'd you out of Virtue: Neither a mean Desire of pleasing and humouring you, nor a servil Fear of of-

I i fending

* ACTS
xx. 24.

fending you has deterr'd me from consulting your Salvation: I have given-up my Time, my Ease, and all my Thoughts to your Service; and to speak with Apostolic Truth and Freedom in Apostolic Words, * I have not *made my Life more precious than myself, nor spared to declare to you all the Counsel of God.*

† EZECH.
iii. 17, 18.

What vain boasting is here! *Some of you, perhaps may be tempted to say to yourselves.* But Christians! Be not hasty to judge; lest you repent at leisure the Injustice you would do me. St. PAUL, I presume, had no Vain-Glory in what he say'd: Neither have I. What I have done for you, while among you, I did with Pleasure; and what I took pleasure in doing was my Duty to do; nay and my Interest also. Ever since I have been with you, I have thought that *the Word of the Lord was made to me, by the mouth of the Prophet, † saying: Son of Man, a Watchman to my People have I given thee: And thou shalt bear the Word out of my Mouth, and shalt tell it them from me. If, when I say to the Wicked, DYING THOU SHALT DIE, thou tell him not, nor speak, that he may be converted from his wicked way and live; the same Wicked Man SHALL DIE in his Iniquity: But HIS BLOOD WILL I REQUIRE AT THY HAND.* My own Salvation then, Christians, was at Stake in the care I have taken

taken of yours; being made accountable to God's rigorous Justice for every Soul among you, which should perish through any neglect of mine. I consider'd myself as the *Watchman* appointed by Heaven, to guard your Souls and warn you of Danger.

And if the Watchman see the Sword coming, * *and sound not with the Trumpet; and the People look not to themselves; and the Sword come and take a Soul from among them; that Soul indeed is*

* *Ibid.*
xxxiii. 6.

CAUGHT IN HIS INIQUITY: But HIS BLOOD I WILL REQUIRE OF THE HAND OF THE WATCHMAN. I had no other chance therefore to deliver my own Soul from Perdition, than (by discharging the part of a faithful *Watchman*) to study your common Safety. For, says the Lord: †

If, thou telling the Wicked that he convert † *Ibid,*
from his ways, he convert not from his way; ver. 9.

HE SHALL DIE in his Iniquity: But THOU HAS'T DELIVER'D THY SOUL. Tell me then, Christians, where is the room for so much as the bare appearance of boasting in a Matter of so much Self-Interest? To do what I have done for you was my Interest, and therefore was it my chief Study; and therefore, I trust in God, that, with Truth and without boasting, I may this day protest, in the Presence of Heaven and You, that, if I have not effectually converted All of you from all your sinful

Ways; I have at least warn'd you of them enough to DELIVER MY OWN SOUL.

And the great Reason I have for making this open solemn Protest, is the Hope I entertain of shocking you into Vigilance for your own Safety, by reminding you of the greatness of your Danger in giving way to Neglect. While I was your immediate Pastor, your spiritual *Watchman*; you might think, perhaps, that your Vigilance was less important; I being equally concern'd with you all to watch for the Safety of all. But remember: The Case is now alter'd; and I now sound the last Trumpet of God's Truth, as your immediate Pastor; to warn you, that I now throw the whole Care of your Salvation on your own Hands. *And he, who beareth the Sound of the Trumpet* (says the Lord by the Mouth of EZECHIEL. *) *whosoever he be, and doth not look to himself, and the Sword come and take him, HIS BLOOD SHALL BE UPON HIS OWN HEAD. But if he shall look to himself, HE SHALL SAVE HIS LIFE.* It is wholly then, Christians, your own eternal Interest to practice, for the future, what it has hitherto been my Interest, in part, to teach you. As I could not, while among you, deliver my own Soul, without revealing to you all the Counsel of God; so neither can you be clean from your own Blood, without committing that Counsel to Memory

• Chapt.
xxxiii. 4,
5

Memory and Execution. Think not, by trusting to the Vigilance of the worthy Pastor who succeeds me, to exempt yourselves from the Duty of waking to your own Safety and remembering the Admonitions I have given you. No: Let your Pastors be ever-so wise good and zealous; all their Vigilance, all their Zeal for your Salvation, will be lost upon you; if it be not accompanied with equal Diligence on your own part. And there is little room to hope you will profit by their Instructions; if you wilfully forget those, which, with so much Labour Sweat and Anxiety, I have endeavoured to give you.

If my Labours should unfortunately have proved fruitless to Some of you; if I do not leave you all better Christians than I found you; if any of you are still unreform'd of your ancient Faults, still unprovided with new Virtues, which I have no room to suspect; examin your own Breasts for the Cause. Is it not perhaps owing to a Secret Perversity in your own Nature, which may have made Some of you despise, forget, or neglect the salutary Counsels I have given you? May you not have come to hear me out of a Spirit of idle Curiosity, or some other earthly Motive, rather than with those Sentiments which alone can justify your coming hither (*I mean*) an humble Consciousness of your
want

want of Information; an earnest pious Desire of being instructed in heavenly Knowledge; and a serious Resolution of following the Instructions you might receive? Or perhaps, may not God have refused to Some of you the Light of his Grace; that Light, without which you could never reap benefit from any Instructions I was capable of giving you? May not God, *I say*, have denied, and justly denied you, that Grace; because you either never vouchsafed to ask it of him, or ask it but seldom, and ask it but faintly? And what Fruit then could any Endeavours of mine abound with where the hand of God has been wanting? For oh Almighty Source of all Good Gifts! By thee enabled to do all things, what profitable Action can we do without thee? *It is neither He who plants* (as my great Master observes *) *nor He who waters; but Thou O God*, who must give the *Encrease*: And from thee alone must the whole Work of our Justification be originally derived. If therefore, dearest Brethren, all I have hitherto said to you has proved to Any of you quite fruitless; if there be Any of you as perverse as ever; if there be One among you, whose evil Habits Inclinations and Attachments are still the same; take all the Guilt upon yourselves: For me, I protest I wash my hands of all the blame; *and I take you, this present day,*

to

• 1 COR.
iii. 7.

to witness, that I AM CLEAN FROM THE BLOOD OF YOU ALL.

On the other hand, Beloved, if the Word of God, which I have labour'd to sow in your Hearts, has taken root and encreased there. For Heaven's Sake, for your own, for my Sake and the Pains I have been at to cultivate and preserve it in you, Oh! promote the growth of that precious Seed. Let not the dear inestimable Grain, given to feed you to eternal Happiness, become, thro' your Neglect, the aggravation of your Misery. Stand then upon your guard, that the Enemy rob you not of your Harvest, nor convert your Aliment into Poison. I know, and it is with Grief I reflect, how greatly you are exposed to the Assaults and Snares of Hypocrites, Infidels, private Debauchees, and scandalous Profligates; who, once they observe you mended in your Manners, will practice every *Satanic* Art to divert you from your virtuous Pursuits; to drag you to Vice: And, where neither Hopes nor Fears, neither Pleasures nor Pains, neither Persuasion nor Example are sufficient to shake your Fidelity; they will try to laugh you out of your pious Sentiments. But, by all which is sacred in Heaven and Earth; by all which is dear to you; by as much as you tender the Salvation of your Souls; let nothing make you stagger in your pious Purposes.

Never

Never be led-away from your eternal Felicity by the Promises or Threats, much less by the Persuasion, Example, or Ridicule of Wicked Men. No, nor suffer even the seemingly Good to impose upon you false or impious Doctrins. Remember the Doctrins I have deliver'd to you: Follow them: And *altho' We or an Angel from Heaven should preach a Gospel to you besides that which we have preach'd to you; let him be* *Anathema*; * believe it not.

*GALAT.
i. 8.

However, Beloved Brethren, You can be in no Danger of this, while you happily remain under the direction of the worthy Pastor to whose immediate Care you are trusted. It is a Blessing which none but Catholics enjoy, that, changing Shepherds, they are sure not to change Pasture. Let their Preachers be ever-so often varied; the Doctrin is still the same. And You, Christians, will enjoy this Blessing in an eminent degree, in the Pastor whom I have recommended to you to succeed me in the Function of preaching and teaching. To This you yourselves seem to be no Strangers. In fact you have approved my Choice: You have chosen him unanimously to succeed me; and therefore do I now resign the Care of you to him. Still the only Consideration which could make me think of resigning the Care of so pious, so exemplary a Flock, a Flock so dear as you are

are to me: The only Inducement to it, *I say*, is the knowing that I cannot spiritually provide for you better, than by leaving you in such hands. You cannot but be sure that He will take full as much pains with you as I have done: And as he is much better qualified than I dare think myself; I hope, his Apostolic Labours will have at least an equal Success with mine.

At the same time: That the little Pains I have hitherto taken for your spiritual Good may not be frustrated by any Misconstruction of my solliciting your Consent to give up the Care of you to another; I think it a Duty incumbent on me publicly to declare: And accordingly at the foot of this sacred Altar (where, if a Priest is ever to be believed, I hope to gain credit) I solemnly do declare, that no Motive of Avarice, or Ambition; no Love of Translations, or Desire of better Accomodations led me to this Resolution of resigning; but the sole Desire of being, in some Sense, *Anathema for you*, by preferring your spiritual Good to my own temporal Conve-
niency. In giving-up the temporal Assis-
tances you allow me, I have no visible Prospect of a greater, equal, or even any certain Provision elsewhere. Nor have I any other fix'd Reliance than on that Divine Providence which never did, and I am certain never will, desert me. It is then

the Desire of fulfilling my spiritual Obligations to you, by putting you into better hands, which removes me from you. And therefore I may boldly say after my great Master, that *being led by the Spirit I go from among you*. If Any of you should be undisposed to believe me, which I hardly can think possible; compare my past with my present Deportment to you. If Ambition or Avarice had now the least Sway with me in leaving you; why did they not bias me while conversant among you? Whereas, that they never did; I appeal to yourselves. For you know, *from the first day that I enter'd in among you, in what manner I have been with you all the time*. Where is the Poor Man, who can say I ever neglected his Rags? Where the Rich Man among you, who can say I courted his Gifts or Favours? For the Glory of God and the Confusion of Hirelings, if there be one such, let him come-forth and give me the Lye in the Face of this numerous Assembly. But: Thanks to the divine Grace, *No Man's Silver and Gold, or Garment have I coveted*. Indeed I have not with St. Paul, had the Glory to toil in the Occupation of Tent-making. And therefore cannot say in the same Sense: *For such Things as were needful for me, these hands have minister'd*. But ah how often have I wish'd to live in an Age, in which

which I might have said so! Happy, thrice happy *St. Paul*, who lived in such an Age: Happy, *I say*, to live in Age, when Nothing but Sin was Sin; and Nothing gave Scandal but Vice and Folly. But in this Age, how would each Flock condemn a Pastor, who, for the sake of preaching the Gospel freely, should join the honest Industry of Mechanic Labour with his Apostolic Toils! It is not then for want of Will I follow'd not the Apostle in this, but for fear of scandalizing the modish Christian. Might I do it without offending; these Fingers should labour to the Bone rather than the Gospel-Liberty of this Tongue should lose it's weight, for any thing the Laity have to give. But since I might not do it; I have therefore thankfully taken what you were pleased to give, unask'd; without so much as one bare Hint to draw a Favour from you. I say thus much barely to convince you, that, tho' your Bounty has far exceeded my Deserts or even Desires, I never served you for the Sake of any of your temporal Favours. No, Dearest Christians, I have all-along labour'd to feed you, not to fleece you: Not your Riches have I coveted but your Salvation. For the great Unfolder of Hearts knows how sincerely and disinterestedly I love and esteem you all; and that you are All, that you are Every-one of you, dear to me in Christ as a First-

K k 2

born,

A FAREWELL SERMON.

born, as an only Babe to the Parents who gave it Being. And therefore nothing could make me chearful under the Circumstance of bidding you, Farewell; but that, tho' I shall no more act as your immediate Pastor, I shall still in some Sense have an eye over you, by frequently, in Compliance with your Request, having the Comfort of preaching to you, and that gratis.

Give me now, dearest Children, give me leave to do you the Justice which is your due, by returning you my humblest Thanks for the great Liberality and Goodness you have shewn to me, but much more by owning the Obligations I have to you for the very great Pleasure you have in general given me, in shewing by your Deportment from time to time, that my little Endeavours were neither ill-taken nor ill-bestow'd. Whence, I hope, I may reasonably conclude, you are convinced, that, whatever I say'd was design'd for your Good, however uncourtly it might be spoken. At least I assure you, that, if any part of my Conduct or Expressions ever gave you Offence, it was (by so much) beyond my Intention. Nevertheless, inoffensive as my Designs have been, I freely ask your Pardon for every unknown Misfortune of displeasing or scandalizing you; and promise myself from your Charity, that you will readily grant it. Your ready and Christian
Compliance

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Compliance hitherto with whatever I exhorted you to, plainly shews that you want only to be reminded of your Duty in order to put it in Practice. And as my Successor in this Ministry is zealous enough to be willing to instruct you in the Obligations of a Christian; so I hope he will have Courage enough never to spare you, when you are remiss in them. And as I know, He will struggle hard to keep you strictly constant to the Holy Sacraments, and to the religious Observance of Holidays and Fasts; so I strenuously recommend to you the being faithful in these Particulars; as well as in a respectful dutious Compliance with the Admonitions which both your Pastors may judge it expedient to give you. God has peculiarly blest you with Two, who are good, learned, wise, and orthodox: Endeavour therefore to deserve the Continuance of this Blessing by your Behaviour to them. And whatever you do, invert not the order of Nature and Grace by presuming to lead your Leaders; but be content in Spirituals to follow them, like a faithful loving Flock. The Bounty you have had for me has been (I own) the pure Effect of your own liberal Charity; but the Case is quite different with regard to your present worthy Shepherds. Their Merit will make that Bounty and the Continuance of it an indispensable Debt. All
the

A FAREWELL SERMON.

the Fault (I dare say) which you will find in them, will be a self-diffident Modesty; if that may be call'd a Fault. And if it be one, Beloved; don't excuse it. No; be revenged on them for it; and be revenged like Christians, *that is*, by striving to excell them; and by studying to conquer their Modesty with encouraging Goodness.

There remains nothing more for me to add, than to recommend you all to God, as I do; and beseech him to pour-down upon you all every Sort of Blessings in this Life, which are any ways conducive to and consistent with the eternal Blessings of the Other. And now, Dearest Christians, I conclude with a double Request to All and Every-one of you, the *first* Part of which concerns yourselves most; and it is to implore that you would be diligent to learn from your Pastors what you ought to do and faithful to put in practice. Be but as solicitous for the *eternal Future* as you are for the *present Temporal*, and you'll soon become perfect Christians. The *second* Part of my Petition relates to myself: And is to beg that you would All charitably join in prayer to God for me, to obtain me this one great Blessing and no more, *that is*, that he will vouchsafe to make me just what he would have me be. You have some Interest yourselves in procuring me
this

this Mercy. For,—once your Intercession takes Effect, my Prayers will in course become as effectual as, for your sakes, I wish them. And thus shall we by mutually helping One-another have the Joy at the last great and general Meeting to be admitted into Heaven, like Flock and Pastors: You in a Body, and I and my Fellow Labourers at the head of you: Or rather shall we enter like Brethren, hand in hand, into that Eternal Kingdom of Glory where we shall All be but one Flock under one Shepherd CHRIST JESUS. Thou then, Oh supremely Good and gracious Shepherd, guide us safe to thee. Send us the Comforter in the mean time to lead us on in every Truth, and warm us with a lively unalterable Faith, a filial well-grounded Hope, an ardent fruitful Love of thee, and perfect Peace and Charity with one-another. Oh Grant this, we beseech thee, in thy unwearied wonted Mercy and *In the Name of the FATHER, and of the SON, and of the HOLY-GHOST. AMEN.*



End of the Fourth and Last VOLUME.

1912-1913



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